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The C A S E of
Religion Consider'd.

12/6

Annals of the City of New York

From the Year 1625 to 1825

By John Smith, Esq. of the City of New York

Vol. I. Part I. The City of New York

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Faults on All Sides.

THE

CASE of RELIGION Consider'd:

SHEWING

The Substance of TRUE GODLINESS;
Wherein are also particulariz'd, Sundry Errors, Maxims and Corruptions of Men and Sects of this present Age, with suitable Observations and Reflections thereon. With some conclusive Reasons to perswade to Unity, Moderation and Charity.

Presented to the Inhabitants (especially) of the Colony of *Rhode-Island*; and all others who make Profession of the Gospel of our

Lord Jesus Christ.

IN SIX SECTIONS.

To which is added,
The Prophecies and Predictions of the Learned *JAMES USHER*, Lord Archbishop of *Armagh*, Lord Primate of *Ireland*, relating to the great Persecution that is yet to break out in *England*, *Scotland* and *Ireland*.

Lam. 2. 13. *What thing shall I take to witness for thee? What thing shall I liken to thee, O Daughter of Jerusalem? What shall I equal to thee, that I may comfort thee. O Virgin Daughter of Zion? For thy Breach is great like the Sea; who can heal thee?*

NEWPORT, *Rhode-Island*: Printed for the Author, and sold by E. Neavegreas and J. Franklin. 1728.





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TO



TO THE
READER.



NOTHING less than a serious Consideration on the present Increase, and prevailing Degree of Impiety, and that ungovernable Spirit of Giddiness and Instability, now so much raging in the World, and particularly in this Government, could have given Birth to these Sheets.

And when I have done, I must acknowledge I can promise my self but little

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little Hopes of Success by them, considering how plenty the World abounds in Books of this Nature, and the fruitless Improvement generally made of them, by most Bookish Christians.

Besides, our Divisions have involved us in many detestable Evils, and one among the rest, which is become much in Vogue among us; which is, to receive or reject not only the reading of a Book, but to measure the Arguments, condemn or extol it, meerly upon the Account of the Author, by the Party he seems to favour, or call himself of. This is such a Degree of Bigottry, that one would think, nothing less than a real Love to Slavery would bring any Man under such unhappy Circumstance, as to anticipate his own Judgment, yield up himself intirely to be governed, to think, speak and act by the Dictates and Maxims of a Party.

The Enemy hath found many ways to deceive poor Mortals, and none greater or more fatal than this: That in the Room of entering into a strict Examination of our own Souls, and returning to a State of true Repentance and

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and new Obedience, we have found out a very artful way to justify and deceive our Souls, by charging our Guilt upon others. Nay, Are there not some that very blasphemously charge God himself to be the Author and Predestinator of all their Villanies? So infectious is the Nature of this Sin, that it hath ever proved the most fatal Cheat, and the greatest Clog, not only to a National, but a Personal Reformation, *Luke 18. 9. Luke 16. 15. 2 Cor. 10. 18.*

Thus, under the Burden of all our Sins, we sit as Judges of others, unconcerned as to our selves, and too often upon our Superiours: So are unwarily betray'd into that Diabolical Sin of speaking evil of Dignities. *2 Pet. 2. 10.*

As to our Superiours, whose Concern it is to teach the Way of Salvation to Mankind, how far they have been, or any of them, instrumental in the present Calamity, and ran counter to the Trust reposed in them, is their Concern to consider.

All Conditions of Men that are wicked, may in legible Characters read (without Repentance) their own Condemnation

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on in the sacred Records. We are expressly told, that every Man shall only be accountable for his own Sins: And that, *the Hand join in Hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished*: And that, *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*. Heb. 12. 14. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. 1 John 3. 10. Ezek. 18. 20.

Certainly, This should rather put us upon the great Concern of making our own Calling and Election sure, than of prying curiously into the State of others. What can we expect to be the Consequence that will follow? What can be the Reward we can expect for all this artificial Zeal, bigotted Noise and Clamour about Religion? Will the thing it self be minded, when the Substance of it is disregarded and wholly neglected, and we go on in a Course of Impiety?

I have often been very thoughtful from whence all this Hypocrisy, and so great a Decay of primitive Piety proceeds, considering, that Men are the same, and have the same Qualities and Qualifications, and the same Scriptures, the same Promise of the Assistance of
God's

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God's Holy Spirit, that they had Sixteen Hundred Years ago.

This certainly then must proceed from some illegal Warrant, and blind Directions, and false Perswasions of Men and Sects: And I am the more fully confirmed in this, from the Predictions of our Saviour and his Apostles of the latter Days. And this will appear more evident, when we consider, that every Error and false Perswasion in the things of God, and matters of Salvation, is not only of a defiling, but of a corrupt Nature, and of an evil Tendency, according to the Tenor and Degree of Malignity in it.

For Instance, that Principle, that all Forms of Prayer are unlawful, has a malignant Tendency in it, to discourage, as well as discountenance, both Family and private Devotion, as that of Prayer. And again, the denying the Morality of keeping the Lord's Day, hath an evil Tendency to put all things into Confusion and Disorder, and to promote Libertinism, Looseness and Impiety. That Opinion again, that Sovereign Power is fixed upon Grace, hath

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a very malignant Tendency to encourage all who are not of the same Religion wth their Prince, not only to disobey his lawful Commands, but cheat him of his Dues; so bring themselves under a double Guilt of Fraud and Rebellion. So it is in all other false Perswasions, in Degrees less or more.

Most of our Divisions, it is to be feared, have sprung from no other Foundation. Are there not many that have set up some obscure and disputable Tenet, and made it the darling Standard of their Sect, and to maintain it have involved themselves in a Gulph of Errors? And it is generally observed, that he that enters the List to maintain the first, looks upon himself then obliged to justify all the Family Errors of that Party, tho' never so ridiculous or erroneous: And too often it is to be feared, after that fordid manner, to *speake wickedly for God, as Job expesses it, and talk deceitfully for him.* So that it is no wonder that Peace and Unity are become so ineffectual: For when Men are come to such a Pitch of devoted Bigottry, they are past all reclaiming; for *they that*
measure

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measure themselves by themselves, as the Apostle expresses it, and compare themselves among themselves, are not wise.
Job 13. 7. 2 Cor. 10. 12.

To what base and wicked Purposes hath that Text, *Julé 3. of contending earnestly for the Faith of the Gospel*, been applyed to? How justly this Text may countenance any Christian against a *Jew*, a *Turk*, or a *Heathen*, or in such things as are absolutely essential, is indisputable; but then we ought to be well assured, that these things we dispute and contend about are such Essentials, as in such a way justify us, lest while we contend for the Shadow, we lose Substance and all, as the once famous Churches of the East have done. We may be well assured, that all Pretensions to Religion, without the Practice, upon the Principles of Morality, is but laying a Foundation upon the Sand. This the Enemy is well apprised of, and hath ever improved his most cunning Devices to extinguish it out of the World; and nothing he hath more successfully succeeded in, than in dividing the Members of Christ into Schisms, and scattering them into Sects: For herein

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he is sure of gaining his Point ; for they can naturally produce no other Fruit, than what directly tends to extinguish both the Principles and Practice of it. 2 *Tim.* 4. 34. *Jam.* 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *James* 4. 2. 3.

The Truth of this will appear indisputable, when we consider from what Quarter proceeds most of this carnal and devilish Hypocrisy : That is, all this sour, waspish, and ill Nature, all this starch Preciseness, Singularity, spiritual Pride and Uncharitableness, all this bitter Envy, Calumny, evil speaking, visible in every Sect. All which *St. James* hath well assured us, descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish : For as the same Apostle before shows the Impossibility for a Fountain to send forth at the same Place sweet Water and bitter ; neither can all these high Pretensions to Religion be real, while there appears so much Venom and Malignity at the Bottom.

It would be well for us that we could more seriously consider these essential Principles of Morality, as they are indeed the very Marrow and Substance of
all

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all Religion : For when once the Practice of this Decays and is extinguished, then all Pretension to Religion is vain.

We may well be assured of this, when we consider the great Care God hath taken to preserve it ; as at first, by his engraving it upon the Table of Men's Hearts, and then again upon the Tables of Stone ; and after in the Person of his dear and well beloved Son ; in whose exemplary Life and holy Precepts, he hath more visibly transcribed those eternal Principles of Morality, as may justly engage us to set the greatest Value on these sacred Records, wherein he hath made so visible a Revelation of himself and a blessed Immortality : Much more when we consider, what miserable Improvement the most knowing Part of the Heathen World have, and do now make of the Light of Nature ; and what we also our selves should, were we now in their Condition without a standing Revelation.

How ought Men therefore to be careful how they espouse Principles that any way tend to undervalue the Holy Scriptures, or any of these moral Precepts therein

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therein recorded, which may justly detect as well those who deny the Scripture to be the Rule of Faith, as others, tho' in a less Degree, yet highly culpable, who have not only extirpated out of their Assemblies of publick Worship, and prohibited the reading those sacred Scriptures, and that moral Part of it, the *Ten Commandments*, but the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Creed*, Singing of *Psalms*. These things ought they to consider, as also the Persons whom God hath appointed thereunto, before they trouble the World with any more of their litigious Disputes, in maintaining those obscure Tenets, much less essential. Or rather, improve their Talents in that more excellent way recommended by *St. Paul*, to promote peace and Unity, Love and Charity in the World.

But this can never be expected while Men preach themselves, and not Jesus Christ. Will blind, bigotted, zeal-hearted, and inflamed Enthusiasm pass for the Dictates of God's Holy Spirit? And will Men become such Fools, as to become wicked Instruments to promote the Interest of the covetous Desires of passionate, proud, and ambitious Men,
whose

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whose Principle we know it it is to make all Men their Slaves, or persecute them as Hereticks? He that is not as mad as themselves, to rail and exclaim against the Church, and call every thing, not excepting the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Creed*, the *Ten Commandments*, by the dreadful Name of *Popery*, is an Enemy, and can expect no better Quarter from them than to be turned out of the Synagogue. So on the other Side, he that judges favourably, and extends Charity to Dissenters, is from such Spirits as likely to meet with the same ill Usage, or at least to be counted an Enemy to the Church. In short, the Blame lies chiefly upon the Laity that will be imposed upon: For was it ever known, that ever the most eloquent Man, either in preaching or praying, ever succeeded in his Ministry, but such who practice themselves what they preached to others? For what is a Man's Learning, Eloquence and Gifts? If he hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Now, what the Fruits of the Spirit are, is manifestly explained by St. *Paul*, *Col. 5. 22, to 26.* And as these, and such as these, ought to be rejected, so ought those that are otherwise, to be highly

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highly esteemed and encouraged by every good Christian: For *he that justifies the Wicked, and he that condemneth the Just, even they both are an Abomination to the Lord, Prov. 17. 15.*

Certainly, we have Reason to believe, the Church of Christ was never at a lower Ebb, or that she had ever fewer sincere Members; for the Enemy is become very formidable, by his Instruments, both within and without, equally designed by him for her Ruin: The first, her corrupt Professors, the worst Enemy of the two. It has always been the Policy of Satan to improve them as instruments to asperse the Truth, and cause it to be evil spoken of: And the latter, to expose it to Contempt and Ridicule. The former genenally pretend they have a great Value for the Church, though they cannot live up to her Principles. Now if these Men would but consider, it would be better for themselves and the Church, so long as they resolve, in their Impiety, never to come within her Doors: For they may be well assured, in coming there under such unsanctify'd Circumstances, they do but increase their own Damnation. *Rom. 1. 18. 2 Pet. 2. 2.* For

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For God that cannot lye, hath expressly declared, that *the Prayers of the wicked are an Abomination unto him*; and that he *will be justified by them that draw near him*. And to the wicked saith God, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy Mouth, seeing thou hatest Instruction*. Thou thoughtest, saith God, that I was altogether such an one as thy self; but I will reprove thee. Now consider this, you that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. Psal. 50. 22. Prov. 15. 8, Isai. 1. 15. Lev. 10. 3. Psal. 50. 16. Isai. 26. 10, 11.

Was the Church once purged of such rotten Professors, as she is from Error and Superstition, there would be little Occasion of writing Books of Controversy or Apologies for her; she would have Charms enough to recommend her, and silence the Aspersions of her Enemies.

These Reflections indeed are very awful; and the more we look into the State of these Times, and compare them with the Predictions of our Saviour and his Apostles, the more we must acknowledge they call aloud to this Generation, especially when we consider the late
C terrible,

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terrible, as well as awful Displays of Heaven, both at Sea and Land, by Storms, Tempests, Earthquakes, and other Calamities in divers Places ; which are to be feared but the Forerunners of that which is greater. *Mat. Chap. 24. Mark, Chap. 13. 2 Tim. Chap. 3. & 4. 2 Pet. Chap. 2. & 3.*

It certainly behoves us to be upon our Watch, lest that great and awful Appearance of the Son of God, should surprize us unawares : For so much he hath told us plainly, *So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the Door. Seeing then that all these Things shall be dissolved, what manner of Persons ought ye to be, in all holy Conversation and Godliness?* *Mark 13. 29. 2 Pet. 3. 11.*

But I must stop. The deep Sense of these Things has carried me too far, my Design in this Preface being only to introduce some Heads of the following Papers. All that I shall here make as an Apology for this Undertaking, is, that it is not with any Design to aggravate any Party : And if any harsh Expressions have dropt unawares, they
are

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are not intended against their Persons,
as Men, but their Corruptions and Errors:
For as all Men are equally the Work-
manship of God, so are they with me.
I hope in God to do them good, which
is the only Design of these Sheets, to per-
swade Men to Peace, Love, Charity and
Moderation, and to call Men from the
Shadow to the Substance of Religion;
from the Form to the Power of Godli-
ness. And if in these Things they suc-
ceed, (tho' they in other Points fail, dis-
putable or of less Moment) give God the
Praise, and I shall rejoyce.

Newport, Rhode-Island,
Jan. 1. 1728.

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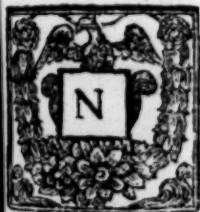
The CASE of *Religion Consider'd.*

S E C T. I.

Micah 6. 8.

James 1. 28.

Gal. 6. 15, 16.



EVER in any Age of the World was there more Enquiry after Knowledge than in these Times, and an uncommon Experience of it in this Island. The Sons of *Adam* are now as busy as ever himself was about the *Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil*; shaking the Boughs, and scrabbling for the Fruit, whilst I fear many are unmindful of the *Tree of Life*. And tho' there be now no Cherubims with their flaming Sword to fright Men off from it, yet the way

way that leads to it seems to be solitary and untrodden, as if there were but few that had any mind to taste the Fruit of it. *Gen. 3. 24.*

There be many that speak of new Glimpses and Discoveries of Truth, of dawning of Gospel Light: And no question but God hath reserved much of this for the very Evening and Sun-set of the World; for in the last Days Knowledge shall be encreased. But yet I wish we could in the mean time see that *Day dawn* which the Apostle speaks of, and that *Day Star arise in men's Hearts*. I wish while we talk of Light, and dispute about Truth, we could walk more as *Children of the Light*. Whereas, if *St. John's Rule* be good, that no Man truly knows Christ but he that keeps his Commandments, it is much to be suspected, that many of us which pretend to Light, have a thick and gloomy Darkness within, overspreading our Souls, *1 John 2. 4.*

There are now many large Volumes and Discourses written concerning Christ, thousands of Controversies discussed, infinite Problems determined; so that our Bookish Christians, that have all their Religion in Writing and Papers, think they are now compleatly furnished with all kind of Knowledge concerning Christ. And when they
see

see all their Leaves lying about them, they think they have a goodly Stock of Knowledge and Truth, and cannot possibly miss of the Way to Heaven: As if Religion were nothing but a little Book-Craft, and meer Paper-Skill. And this I fear will discover many of us (notwithstanding all this Light which every contending Sect boast of) to have nothing at the Bottom but Egyptian Darkness within upon our Hearts. *Isai.* 58. 2. *Deut.* 30. 11 to 14. *Titus* 1. 16. *1 Cor.* 8. 2, 3. *Rom.* 2. 29.

Most think that they know Christ enough out of their Creeds, Catechisms, Confessions of Faith. And is there not many of the more learned; if they can but wrangle and dispute about Christ, they think they are safe? There is no need of purging and purifying of their Hearts. I don't say but those Systems and Bodies of Divinity are and may be useful in a subordinate Way; but to feed our selves wholly upon them, how sweet soever they may seem to the Taste at present, will prove bitter in the End; for it is the Practice our Saviour prescribes: *He that will do my Father's Will* (saith he) *shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.* *John* 7. 17. *Mat.* 7. 22, 23. *John* 6. 63.

It is being God-taught, as well as Book-taught, that will justify us: It is he that hath

an Unction from the Holy One that hath the Spirit of Christ dwelling within him, that testifies to his Spirit that God is true. It is he, and he only, that searcheth out the deep things of God: For as *no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.* Ink and Paper can never of themselves make us Christians to beget a new Nature, and a living Principle in us; can never form Christ spiritually and effectually in our Hearts. All that we can attain by reading, is to instruct us, and set us in such a Way that leads towards our Happiness: But that of it self can never conduct us thither, *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him Understanding.* Job 32. 8, 9. Eccl. 11. 5. John 3. 8.

The Spirit it self, its true, is a thing of a dark and secret Operation, and the manner of its working in the Soul none can descry: For as underminers are never seen till they have wrought their Purposes, so the Spirit is never perceived but by its Effects, and that the Effect of the Spirit it self, so far as it concerns Knowledge and Instruction, cannot be of particular Information, for Resolutions in any doubtful Case in Matter of Faith: For as it works secret in its Operation to themselves,

selves, yet can no way appear evident to others. We have, it is true, the same Promise of the Spirit that was made to the Apostles themselves; yet it must be acknowledged, that it is fulfilled to us after another manner: For when the Spirit Regenerates any Soul, it infuses no Knowledge that is new of any Point of Faith, but sends him to the Scriptures. So when it stirs him up to Newness of Life, it doth not exhibit to him an Inventory of his Sins, but supposes them known by the Light of Nature, and the Scriptures: And what those Things are that exclude from Salvation, are plain & intelligible to the meanest Capacity. St. Paul tells us in *Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* And on the Contrary, our Lord will answer that Question, *How readeſt thou,* Luke 10. 26, 27, 28. From these and the like Places, we may safely draw conclusions, concerning our State, from the Conformity of our Lives to the Love of God and our Neighbours.

As to the Christian Religion, and those Laws Christ hath made necessary, they are not many, that we need to be scared at them. Many are apt to think because the Bible is a great Book, conclude, that the Divine Laws to be almost numberless, and so indeed they are, as they are improved and multiplied by our Divisions. But other-

ways, the greatest Part of the Bible consists of History, and Relation of Matter of Fact, and of pious Men's devout Prayers and Praises. And in the preceptive Part, there are very many Laws that are abrogated, and never concern Christians. And those which are of Force, are many of them abundance of Times repeated and inculcated. *Matth.* 22. 37, 38, 39, 40. *Gal.* 5. 14, 15. *Titus* 2. 11. 12.

In short, our whole Duty may be brought into a very narrow Compass. St. Paul reduceth it to three Heads, *Sobriety, Righteousness, and Godliness*; our blessed Saviour to two, *The Love of God and our Neighbours*: And the Particulars of each of these are easily and quickly learned: Nay, they are generally written in our Hearts, as St. Paul tells us, mostly they are the plain Dictates of natural Reason. It is not an airy Notion of Christ & his Word swimming in our Brains, but Christ really dwelling and living in our Hearts. He is the best Christian whose Heart beats with the truest Pulse toward Heaven, and not he whose Head spinneth out the finest Cobwebs. Christ came not into the World to fill our Heads with meer Speculations, to kindle a Fire of Wrangling and contentious Disputations among us, whilst in the mean time our Hearts remain all Vice within towards
God

God, and Inhumanity towards our Neighbours. There is a Set of Bigots in the World of both Sexes, that I look upon to be not only the greatest Enemies to Religion, but to Unity, and the worst Disturbers of Mankind: And were it not for our Divisions, that they are chiefly made Tools of, they of all in humane Shape would be the least esteem'd of.

It is very rarely known that ever such made good Magistrates, good Ministers, good Christians, good Subjects, Neighbours, Husbands or Wives.

The two grand Impostors of this Age, are, pretended Zeal, and a Pretence of the Spirit: And if they be zealous, what dare they not do? And when they presume they have the Spirit, what dare they not say? Yet the Spirit is not to be separated from her Office, because Dreams, or rather the Co-operation of Men's Lusts, do pass for Revelations. Therefore we are commanded to try the Spirit, whether it be of God, and not to believe every Spirit; that is, every pretended Inspiration. And this is the Method we are to try them by, their Agreement or Disagreement to, or from, the Word of Truth. And in this Word the Spirit of God teacheth to be zealous and not cruel; to be devout and not superstitious; to hate Idolatry and not

not commit Sacrilege; to stand fast in our Christian Liberty, and not make it a Cloak of Maliciouſness. Teaches Liberty, yet commands Obedience to Superiours, all from one and the same Spirit. There is nothing more talked of in the World than Religion, and nothing less understood. Many upstart Novices there are in the World, who pretend they have the Spirit above Measure, but know not what at the same Time it means. They are spiritual in the Twinkling of an Eye; they know not how, nor no Man else. *Acts* 20. 29, 30. *Mat.* 24. 24. *I John* 4. 1.

It is to be feared, that the Name of the Holy Spirit and Christ, is chiefly made use of to serve our Lusts and Interest. We say, Lo here is Christ, and, lo there is Christ, in these and those Opinions: Whereas in Truth, Christ is neither here nor there, or any where but in that Soul where the Spirit of Christ, where the Life of Christ dwells. Do we not make this and that Opinion, this and that outward Mode, Form and Gesture, to be the Wedding Garment; and boldly Sentence those to utter Darkness that are not of us. He is a good Moral Man, but he's a *Churchman*, a *Quaker*, a *Baptist*, a *Presbyterian*, saith one of another. I would put the Question to them all, How long a good Moral Man hath been

been such a Monster? What is the Decalogue, but an Abridgment of Morality? What is Christ's Sermon on the Mount, but an Improvement of it? And now, shall civil and honest Conversation be counted the Mark of a Reprobate? Is this the Fruits of our Divisions, that Religion must consist in Modes and Forms, in Words and Phrases, while Justice and Mercy shall be expos'd as Monsters. *Exod. 20. Matt. 5. 6, 7. Rom. 2. 14, 15. Rom. 14. 17, 18.*

But they will one Day find to their great Surprize, that he only that builds up his Morality, Justice and Mercy upon his Faith in Christ, and keeps a good Conscience, and doth to others what he would have others should do to him, shall, I question not, enter in, and have a Mansion above; when the uncharitable, speculative, and seraphick Hypocrite, who decree for God, and pre-ordain their Places for themselves, shall be shut out of the Gate of Bliss. How ambitious are Men in this Age to be accounted just, and how unwilling to be so. How loud are most to condemn Sin in the Presence of others, and then make themselves as invisible as they can, that they may commit it? What a Sin is Uncleannefs in Publick, and what a Blessing in Private?

With

With what Gravity and Severity will a corrupt Judge threaten Iniquity, give Sentence to whip the Thief, and hang the Murderer, which is no other than hanging and whipping himself by Proxy. How doth the World abound with Oppressors, and yet most Saints. That so many should forfeit their Honesty, and yet count their Election sure! *Rom. 2. 1, 2, 3.*

When I see a Man officiate in a great Audience as an Ambassador of Christ, with his Hands lifted up to Heaven, rolling his Eyes with a composed Countenance. When I hear him mightily gifted, zealous in Prayer, and as loud in reviling the Iniquity of the Times, and crying as loud for Reformation, as the Idolatrous Priests did upon *Baal*: Or when I hear one preach up Unity, Peace, and Uniformity, and against Heresies, Schisms and Hypocrisy, I begin to think, I see an Angel in his Flight mounting up towards Heaven. But then, after all this show of Devotion; after all this Zeal, and in the midst of all this Noise, when I see him to be a Man swell'd with Pride, void of Charity, practice Flattery, use Partiality; and in short, to be quite the Reverse to what he teaches. *Levit. 19. 3. Psal. 50. 16, 17. 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14, 15.*

Such

Such Men may be proper Advocates to promote the Kingdom of Darkness, but never can that of God and Religion. It is an imprudent thing for any Man to pretend, that he is concerned that others should glorify God and keep his Laws, when he is so ready to dishonour him himself. Such Men ought to be discarded, as Usurpers of such Offices, as in Right only belong to good Men. Such Men may talk great, and cry aloud for God and Religion, yet at the same Time are the greatest Enemies to both: For it is a Discredit to the Cause they maintain, that they are known for Men that speak never a Word true. Who is just and righteous in a Lay Capacity, speaks more than the other; for his exemplary Life may gain some Profelites, but the Former is likeliest to make more Atheists: For how many have been brought to believe that Religion is nothing but Priestcraft and a Chear, when they have seen Men of that Order who talk like Angels, and live like Devils? As to this we need but cast our Eyes upon the personal Deportment of too many, God knows, of the Teachers of each Sect. What an Air of uncharitable Starchness do they show towards each other, and upon the least Difference that happens, even with Men of their own Order and Communion? What Enmity and ill

ill Nature do they generally discover, and what Backwardness to a Reconciliation? And as to the Language at every Turn they give one another, none can be ignorant, that have ever read their Books of Controversys; for they generally make manifest to the World what Spirit they are of, whatever becomes of the Truth of their Arguments: For he that hath not the Spirit of Christ, is none of his. *For the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God*, saith St. James: And St. Peter is more full, 1 Pet. 3. 15. *But sanctify the Lord God in your Hearts, and be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh you a Reason of the Hope that is in you, with Meekness and Fear.* Jam. 1. 20.

What Man will ever be convinc'd in things that are sacred by a Railer, or perswaded by an angry Man? Neither will Men be jeer'd or hector'd out of their Errors or Mistakes. It is the Men of this Kidney that in all Ages have been the most mischievous to the Church's Peace; for the Truth it self is suspected from the Mouth of such Men.

Such indiscreet and furious proceedings have been the only Means that have created that ill Blood that is among Christians; and not only exasperates Men's Minds against the Truth and one another, but destroys

stroy all Charity, which is the Life of Religion.

Spiritual Pride, the Sin of the fallen Angels, and the Love of Money, which is the Root of all Evil, have been another leading Cause of the Church Divisions.

S E C T. II.

Job. 11. 7, 8.

1 Cor. 13. 2.

1 John 3. 10.

CAST we our Eyes to the Reformation: From a small Beginning, started by *Calvin*, concerning God's absolute Decree of Reprobation, what a Bone of Contention inflamed all Christendom, and to this Day is made a standing Master Tenet of a Sect. And this one would think should be as ungrounded a Perswasion, and have as little to warrant it from Scripture or Reason, as any that yet were ever received. For what doth it less but reflect upon some of the most glorious Attributes of God, and in Effect to make God to have two Wills one contrary to the other, his revealed Will and his secret Will. In his revealed Will one would think that nothing could be more clear and expressive than that of

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Ezekiel,

Ezekiel, in which we have not only the Word of God, but his Oath, that he taketh no Delight in the Death of the Wicked; and that Christ suffered Death for every Man; and that he concluded all under Sin, that he might have Mercy upon all; and that Faith and Repentance should be preached to every Creature, to all Nations, beginning at *Jerusalem*. *Luke* 24. 47. *Deut.* 29. 29. *Ezek.* 18. 32. *Rom.* 5. 18. *Rom.* 11. 32.

Now will any Man dare to affirm from those and the like Declarations of God, that he should call Men to Repentance, whom he hath bound in Chains by an absolute Decree; and to Salvation, whom he hath damned from all Eternity? These are Principles that are very shocking and terrible. One would be amazed to think how they should be entertain'd by Men, and not a few of these Times, of great Parts, and otherways well esteemed. But they were Men, and fallible Men might be deceived, and deceive others.

Whatever they were, we know that secret things belong to God, and what is revealed to us and our Children: We are nowhere commanded, that I know of, to pry into those Secrets. But the wholesome Counsel and Advice given us in God's Word, is this, to make our Calling and Election

Election sure, and to purge our selves from Sin; then shall we be Vessels of Honour. We have no Warrant (as I said) in Scripture to peep into those hidden Rolls and Volumes of Eternity. Those divine Purposes, whatever they be, are altogether unknown and unsearchable by us: For probably in our soaring too high, we may be struck back with Lightning. *2 Pet. 1. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 21.*

The Way to obtain a good Assurance indeed of our Title to Heaven, is not to climb up to it by a Ladder of our own ungrounded Perswasions, but to dig as low as Hell, by Humility and Self-Denial in our own Hearts. And though some may think this may be the farthest Way about, it is certainly the nearest and safest Way to it. God's everlasting Purposes are too dazzling an Object for us poor Mortals to see into. It is far easier and safer for us to look upon the Rays of his Goodness and Holiness, as they are reflected in our own Hearts, and there to read the mild and gentle Characters of God's Love to us, in our Love to him, and our hearty Compliance with his heavenly Will. We shall not then care for peeping into those hidden Records of Eternity, to see whether our Names be written there in golden Characters. No: We shall find a Copy of God's

Thoughts concerning us written in our own Breasts: But on the Contrary, all our Confidence of our being Elected, without Holiness, we shall find many a cold Qualm seizing upon our Spirits and telling us to the contrary.

Another of the same Stamp sprung up about the same Time; that Controversy about Sanctification and Justification, which now are made the distinguishing Tenets of some Sects; taken from the seeming Contradiction of *St. Paul* and *St. James*. We are not justified by Works, but by Faith, saith *St. Paul*: And not by Faith, but by Works, saith *St. James*; and yet both true, and so easy, reconcilable and plain of themselves, that how they should become the Cause of so great Contention, is no less surprizing. *Rom.* 3. 28. *Jam.* 2. 24.

As it is a Truth, that no Man can go unto God, before he believe that God is, what Madness is it to believe in God, and see the Way to Eternity, and not walk in it? For if I believe Christ in God, it will follow that I must worship him: And if he died for Sin, the Consequence is plain we must die to Sin: And if he so loved us, the Consequence is also as plain we ought to love one another; for Charity is the proper Effect of Faith, and upon Faith and
Charity

Charity we build our Hope. *Luke 6. 46, 47.*

Of small Beginnings, what mad Work hath proceeded even from things of less Moment, in Externals, and of meer Circumstances of Religion? First, at the broaching that Controversy of the Subject and Mode of Water-Baptism: From a small Spark of Discontentment, headed by wicked Agents, on a sudden so inflamed and exasperated them, that in 1525 in *Germany*, were no less than Fifty Thousand innocent Persons massacred at one Time, and considerable more at another. They began, as their Pretence was, for a Reformation in the Church, and particularly that of Baptism; but they ended with the deposing of Civil Magistrates, and the Destruction of the People. *1 Pet. 2. 16, 17. Mat. 7. 16.*

It would be too melancholly a Reflection, and too long to insert in these Papers, of the inhumane and bloody Tragedy, that under the Cover of Religion, hath been acted since the Reformation among Protestants. Every Sect acting their Part whenever they got uppermost, not only in *England* and *Scotland*, but this Country also. They tell us it was for Religion, but in Truth it was for want of Religion: For if their Religion had been pure and undefiled, it would have saved many a poor Carcase from the Fire, and

and I may say, many a Soul from Hell. And tho' Men's Opinions in other Matters had been as different as their Shapes and Complexions; yet their Agreement in the known and fundamental Duties of Religion, would have been a Fence and a Bulwark strong enough to have kept Contention from breaking in with Fire and Sword. The Transaction of things that are past, may give us the clearest Prospect of future Events; for what is past may be again: Therefore by comparing Men and Things past, we may thus conclude, That Men of the same Principles, acting by the same Engines, and pointing at the same Ends, will not fail, whenever it is in their Power, to work the same, or something of the like Effect. *Mat.* 7. 18, 19, 20.

S E C T. III.

Gen. 17. 10.

Col. 2. 11. 12.

Acts 2. 38, 39.

IT is a difficult thing to state the First Rise of any principal Error, (for they generally come creeping into the World a long Time undiscoverable,) or the first moving Cause that set them at Work.

As

As to the Name or Practice of Re-baptizing; the first I think we have in the 19th of the *Acts* of the Apostles: From which may be inferred, That after Christ's Resurrection, *John's* Baptism was insufficient, as not being baptized in the Name of the Holy Trinity; without which Words, the whole Christian Church hath ever looked upon Baptism to be null. *Anno* 250 this Practice was revived against *Novatus*, and his Follower. They denied not the Baptizing of Infants, but rebaptized them, as they looked upon them before to be Hereticks. *Anno* 380 this Practice was revived by *Donatus*, who with the former, denied not the baptizing of Infants, but would allow of no Baptism good, but his own. In 1524³ this Practice was revived again by one *Baltazar*, and *Nicholas Stock* in *Germany*; who not only rebaptized, but denied Infants of believing Persons to be lawful Subjects of Baptism.

What was the first moving Cause of stumbling into the Error of opposing Infant-Baptism, is hard to determine; whether Resentment, Interest, Conscience; or rather Enthusiasm, Distraction; as in *Germany* it appeared demonstrable to be the latter. But as their Rise was sudden and surprizing, so in like manner was their Disappearance; for both they and their Principles in a Moment

ment vanished, like the Morning Dew : For from that Time to the latter Part of King Charles the First's Reign, when there hardly any, or but few of that Principle to be known. But in *Oliver's* Time it revived ; from which Time they have appeared more like Men and Christians, and have not wanted Advocates, and some of no small Note, as *Tombes, Brecken, Oates*, and others : Some of whose Performances I have seen, both from them and those of a later Sect, of no less a Genius, who upon different Extreams, have grossly mistaken Truth for Falshood : And what is the most awful, that they have been able to render the one so much like the other.

But as very often there is a Chain of Causes that lead Men into Error, so it is the Opinion no less of some, that it was the not rightly distinguishing the Difference between the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*, and the Covenant of Works. And the most likely this appears to be true, from the general Opinion the ancient Antipredobaptists held concerning the Covenant God made with *Abraham*, that it was not a Covenant of Grace but of Works, only with annexed Rewards and Promises of an Earthly Canaan of the good Things of this Life.

Which

Which is not only an Error, but a dangerous and uncharitable Error, that leads to Curse where God Blesses; and at once dispossesses its Votaries of all Charity. For what is the Consequence less, than to leave the whole Church of the *Jews* without a Saviour, and in no better State but upon a Level with the Heathen World, Strangers from the Covenant of Promise. *Eph. 2. 12.*

But to the Contrary, nothing can be more plain than that the Covenant God made with *Abraham*, was a Gospel Covenant, drawn in *Urn* of the *Caldeans*, Four Hundred and Thirty Years before the Law; which was free from all Terror, and replenished with all Sweetness of Love and Mercy. But that of the Law was given to *Moses* on Mount *Sinai*, with great Terror, as became the Glory of God's Justice against Transgression, which was added as a School-Master till the Seed should come.

Cast we our Eyes back, even from the Creation of the World: Since God hath had a Church upon Earth in Covenant, Infants were included in it. Before the Law, and under the Law, and since the Gospel. In all Countries where Christianity hath been planted, Infants have been received in Covenant with their believing Parents by Baptism,

rism, except by the aforeſaid Antipeedobaptiſts.

Look we into *Europe*, all Parts of the Eastern and Western Churches, the Church of *England*, the Church of *Scotland*, *Rome*, the *Greek Churches*, *Ruſſia*, *Muſcovy*, all the Chriſtians that inhabit in *Syria*, *Meſopotamia*, *Babylon*, and other Places there ſpread abroad in Forty Kingdoms, with all thoſe abſent Chriſtians in *Africa*, and alſo thoſe *Armenian Chriſtians* ſpread over the *Turkiſh Empire*, as well as thoſe inhabiting *Aleppo*, *Damaſcus*, *Libanus*. All thoſe of *Bavaria*, *Holatia*, *Bohemia*, *Ausburg*, *Wittenburg*, *Saxony*; with all other Parts of the World, where Chriſtians inhabit. All conſent for the baptizing their Infants, as founded upon the Word of God.

As we may obſerve, the Covenant of Grace from the beginning, is but one and the ſame for Subſtance. Whether that made with *Adam* after the Fall, and alſo that to *Noah* and *Abraham*, expreſſed in *Gen. 17*. And that renewed to us, as expreſſed by *St. Paul* in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*. The Difference only is their Diſpenſations.

The Covenant of Grace God made with *Adam* included all his Poſterity, till ſuch time as by their ſcandalous Tranſgreſſions they became diſinherited, by that Promise, that

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the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's Head, which Seed was Christ, as St. Paul expresses, to whom the Promise was made, Gal. 3. 16.

The same Covenant of Grace was re-established with *Abraham* and his Family, including their Seed, Gen. 6. 18. and 9. 9. But in a more eminent manner God was pleased to renew this Covenant with *Abraham* and his Seed, with more visible and distinguishing Marks of Churchhood, by that initiating Seal of Circumcision, which as St. Paul expresses, was a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, Gen. 17. 10. Gal. 3. 8, 17. John 7. 22. And under the Law we find no Alteration, as to the State and Covenant Privilege of Infants, as we read in Exod. 4. 24. Exod. 12. 48, 49, 50. Numb. 3. 28. Deut. 29. 11, 12. And under the Gospel Dispensation, this Privilege to Infants is far from being disannul'd by any Prohibition from Heaven in the new Testament, nor any Text that looks like it; but altogether to the contrary, by innumerable Texts that enforce the Practice by undeniable Consequence.

As to the Relation of Children and Women, both Testaments are very sparing. The general Reason is this: Because the Woman chiefly is comprehended in the Man, and the Children in the Parents, as the Head often comprehends the whole, especially in a covenanting

venanting way, is undeniable, *Gen* 22. 17. *Gen* 16. 6. *Exod* 12. 4. *Exod* 12. 48. *Acts* 10. 47. *Luke* 19. 9. These, and numberless Instances, and them of meer Circumstances, that our Adversaries are obliged as well as we to believe, as firm as if the words had been more expressive. There is no express word for a Woman to receive the Lord's Supper, neither Command nor Example. Yet our Adversaries believe there is Consequences equal to that of an express Word, and Dronger and clearer than the former. Indeed, as for the Time of the Administration of *John* the Baptist, and before our Saviour suffered upon the Cross, we have no Reason to expect that Infants should be particularized, because Circumcision was then in Force: For till Christ suffered upon the Cross, the Foundation was not laid for the temple constituting a Gospel Church. And to this agrees Mr. *Marshall*, in his late *Chronology* of the Seventy Weeks of *Daniel*; and where he proves it from several Texts of Scripture.

It shows a Demonstration of great weakness, if not worse, in some, and what runs thro' a whole Party, as appears from their Books of Controversies, especially relating to Baptism; wherein we find the Bulk of

there is a Testimony in the Death of the Believer, for a Testimony

them consists, and the Substance of their Arguments collected from *John's* Baptism. Now I say, how *John's* Administration as to his Baptism can be proper Testimonies to be brought in to be the same, to prove Christian Baptism, they would do well to consider. They might see plain what *John* did, had no Force to disannul any Ordinance in the Church of the Jews; and much less could he institute a standing Ordinance in the Church of Christ.

They might also see that *John* Baptizing the Jews, gave them no Discharge from using the Temple Worship, circumcising their Children, partaking of the Passover, being cleansed according to the Law: Nay, they were bound to do it, neither did our Saviour himself, nor yet his Disciples, in his Life Time, form any Society in a Way of Distinction from the Communion of the Jewish Church. It is true indeed, he form'd out some Shades, and Descriptions of what he design'd to do: For, until our Lord's Ascending into Heaven, the Legal Dispensation had not their Accomplishments, during which Time the Ceremonial Law, and difference betwixt Jews and Gentiles, was yet standing; and the Reason *St. Paul* tells us in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *9, 16, 17.* *For where a Testament is, there must of Necessity be the Death of the Testator: For a Testament*

is of Force after Men are dead, otherwise it is of no Strength at all, while the Testator liveth.

All that *John* the Baptist required of the Jews, was, a Reformation in their Lives, and to receive him as a Messenger sent by God to prepare them for a Reception of Christ, and that Reformation that was just at the Door: And where *John* ended, Christ and his Disciples preached the same, that *the Kingdom of Heaven was at Hand*. As he had also suffered himself to be baptized, and his Disciples to do the same; so he did to be circumcised, for this end, he came to fulfil all Righteousness, as well as to justify *John*, as much as they had a Reference to himself and his Sufferings, and the Salvation of Mankind: So far their Acts were righteous; but every righteous Action is not the same, neither was *John's* Baptism nor Christ's the same. They differ extreamly wide in their Institution, in their Excellency, in their Name and Form, as also the Time of their Practice. The Distinction that is made, and the Insufficiency of one from the other, we have numberless Instances, and that very plain one, Acts 19. 3. 4. 5. *And he said unto them, Unto what were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's Baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the Baptism of Repentance, saying*

unto the People, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is on Christ Jesus. And when they heard this, they were Baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus. That is, meaning into his Baptism, or that Form of Baptism which the Lord Jesus instituted.

As the great Concern of John was to prepare the Jews for a Reception of Christ, and the Reformation that was to follow; so we find that those of the Jews that conform'd themselves accordingly, are distinguished from the rest of the unbelieving Jews. In the 11th Chapter to the Romans, the Apostle shows us that such were the very Branches that were not broken off, but kept their Places in the Church of God, as also their Infants. And herein the Apostle St. Paul is very plain, Verse 16, 17. *For if the first Fruit be holy, the Lump is holy. And if the Root be holy, so are the Branches. And if some of the Branches be broken off.*

Now I say, if the aforesaid Jews be those Branches (as the Apostle must infer in the Text) that were not broken off, and consequently not unchurched, neither were their Children; for no solid Reason can be given, why those Children (I mean of the believing Jews, for here pinches the Controversy)

troverſy) ſhould be unchurched, ſeparated from their Parents in thoſe external Church Priviledges they were in Covenant before equally poſſeſſed of. Without ſome Prohibition to the Contrary from Heaven, we have no Reaſon to think any ſuch thing; and for any ſuch Prohibition, we are well aſſured is not to be produced in any Part of the ſacred Records.

As to the Church State of the Jews, and in Relation to *Abraham's* Covenant, it is plain, it conſiſted in this, That God was their God, and the God of their Seed in their Generation, keeping Covenant. Neither is there any Command of Chriſt that it ſhould be alter'd and abrogated upon their receiving of him, but quite the Reverse, from many clear Texts: For as this was that gracious ſtanding Covenant made with *Abraham* from the Beginning, ſo that the Jews that did believe, were not by Faith firſt caſt out of the Covenant, and then receiv'd into it anew by Baptiſm; their Baptiſm, it is plain, continued them in that gracious Covenant, under a new Diſpenſation; from whence the unbelieving Jews were indeed cut off, for their rejecting of Chriſt, being a high Breach of the Covenant it ſelf, for which the Gentiles were grafted in; that is, into that very Stock and Covenant of *Abraham*.

I have the longer insisted upon these two Grand Mistakes, one in that of *John's* Baptism, the other in denying *Abraham's* Covenant to be a Covenant of Grace; because as the latter leads to deny Infant Baptism, so in mentioning the former to be *Christ's* Baptism, doth in a great Measure invalidate all Water Baptism, and that of *Christ's* own Institution, for the Quakers finding so little Foundation in this of *John*, believe the rest to be of the same Stamp. They both agree in one, that of lessening and dividing the Covenant of Grace, but differ extremely wide in the other. For is one will have *John's* Baptism of Water to be Christian Baptism, before the Spirit was given, as the Text expresses of the Holy Ghost in a Way of Eminency, so the other will have Christian Baptism of the Holy Ghost without Water.

But now I come to what * *Mr. Barclay* says, and in Truth what we build the whole Superstructure upon, *Mat. 28. 19, 20.* and that he nor the Antipædobaptists bath, nor ever I presume will be able to overthrow.

When our blessed Saviour gave his Grand Commission, *Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20.* he gave it in as general Terms to include Infants as

* *Barcl. Apol. p. 431.*

possible, and as directly contrary to the Hypothesis of the Quakers as Words can express; as may be inferr'd, both from the Propriety of the Words, and the Congruity of the Sense: For the very first Word (*Teach*) must be thought to signify what Christ used properly in other places, namely, *Make Disciples*; and thus it is expounded by *John*, Joh. 4. 1. Otherwise they would make of it Tautology; and also in the Quaker's Sense, of Baptizing by Teaching, a double Tautology. But that this is Water-Baptism, I shall further demonstrate, and that Infants are included in it.

Now as to the several Sorts of Baptism expressed in the new Testament, saving that of *John's*, Mat. 3. 5. and that of the Holy Ghost, Mat. 3. 11. are not pretended by our Adversaries, to be one and the same with that of Mat. 28. 19. so shall not need to insist upon them, nor that of *John* any further, but a little consider that of the Holy Ghost, which the Quakers pretend to.

Now we are to consider, First, the Distinction the Scripture gives of the Holy Ghost, as being Two fold, the one Ordinary, the other Extraordinary; as also of its different Ends and Designs, as well before Christ suffer'd as since; and for want of

a well grounded Understanding in this, Men are generally confused. As for Instance, Joh. 7. 39. As it is said, *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified*: Yet we know, that Men were endued with the Holy Ghost before Christ suffered. So in this or the like place, we are to understand he speaks in a way of Eminency, of that of the Extraordinary that was to follow.

Now as to the Ordinary Degree of the Holy Ghost, it is what Christ promised in *Mat. 28. 20.* That should accompany his Ordinances, in the assisting every Member of his Church in the Performance of our Duty, and to empower us to do all things that are necessary to the Salvation of our Souls.

But the Extraordinary Gifts are of another Nature: They are such whereby Men are enabled to perform wonderful Works and Miracles, and that for some Extraordinary Designs of Providence. Now we never read in the Language of the Holy Scripture, of Baptizing with the Holy Ghost, but in this Extraordinary Way: So by Consequence, this must be the Baptism intended by those People among us now, who pretend to baptize with the Holy Ghost.

And further, it is plain, This is that very Baptizing with the Holy Ghost inferr'd by *John* the Baptist, *Mat.* 3. 11. and prophesied of by *Joel*, 2. 28, 29. compared with *Acts* 2. 16, 17. As it visibly was made manifest by its Effects, *Acts* 1. 3, 4, 5.

Now that this cannot be the Baptism that Christ intended in *Mat.* 28. 14. to continue a standing Ordinance to the end of the World, will appear from these two Reasons.

First, When we cast our Eyes upon that Text, *Acts* 1. 3, 4, 5. that great Day of Pentecost, What do we see there but the great Power of God, accompany'd with supernatural Events, especially that of speaking divers Languages. Now this Baptizing of the Holy Ghost and Fire, as soon as the inspired Penmen had finished the sacred Volumes, and the Gospel was well planted, this extraordinary Baptism, with its Operation and Effects, ceased; as is evident from that Time to this: For Tongues and Miracles were not appointed, saith the Apostle, for Signs to them that believe, but to them that believe not, *1 Cor.* 14. 22. Therefore this cannot be the Baptism expressed, *Mat.* 28. 19, 20.

Secondly, As it was the great Power of God, and the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the

the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, to whom the Work is wholly to be ascribed, and not to Men, nor by Men; for the Apostles themselves never took this Honour upon them, nor much less their Successors never pretended to baptize with the Holy Ghost. Search the sacred Volumes, and we shall never find that ever God invested any Mortal or meer Man with so great a Power. It is true, the Church of *Rome* make some Pretensions of such a Power invested in them, to grant Pardons; as they do also pretend to work Miracles, but they have always come short in the Proof.

Besides this, That Baptism of the Holy Ghost, of extraordinary Gifts, was not universal, nor thought necessary in the Apostles Time to give a Person Admittance into the Christian Church, is plain from *Acts* 8. But the Baptism of Water was General, even necessary to be applied to those who had received the Holy Ghost. For what can be more expressive than that Text, *Acts* 10. 47. *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost, as well as we?*

And therefore we may safely ground our Faith upon this, That the Baptism our Saviour instituted in *Mat.* 28. 19. was Water-Baptism: And it is further undeniable from

from the following plain and exprefs Texts, *Acts* 8. 36. *Chap.* 10. 47. *Chap.* 22. 16. *Eph.* 5. 25, 26. *1 Pet.* 3. 21. No sooner hereupon than that the Foundation was fully laid, and the Holy Ghost given, the Partition Wall broken down, than Circumcision became virtually dead. For saving that Instance of *Timothy*, as an indifferent Action of *St. Paul* in a Way of Political Compliance, we find *St. Peter* upon laying the first Foundation of a Christian Church among the Jews, presses upon them the Necessity of Water-Baptism, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. saying, *Be baptized every one of you ; for the Promise is to you and your Children.* Observe, he doth not say the Promise was to you and your Children, but the Promise is. Now what was this Promise, but the Promise God made to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Luke* 1. 72, 73. *Gal.* 3. 17. with all the Priviledges to Believers and their Infants, as before promised, keeping Covenant, with the Promise of his Grace here, and Glory hereafter.

The same Promise *St. Paul* preached to the Gentiles, as a received Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, that the Children of Believers were holy, *1 Cor.* 7. 14. That is, in such a related Sense as God was pleased to accept of, with their Parents ; that both Root and Branch might be ingrafted into

into the Body of Christ's Church. This was God's Method and Promise to *Abraham*; through his Faith his whole Family should be received into Covenant, *Gen. 17. 23, 27.* And in him all the Families of the Earth, to the End of the World, in like manner should be blessed. *Gen. 12. 3. In thee shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed. And Jesus said unto him, This Day is Salvation come to this House; for so much as he also is the son of Abraham, Luke 19. 9. Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the Kingdoms of the Earth be blessed, Acts 3. 25.* Can any thing demonstrate more plainly than to show, that this was God's Method and Promise with *Abraham*? That the same End and Design should proceed in a Covenant Way after Christ, in Relation to Believers and their Infants, according to its first Establishment?

And also, Can any thing be more plain, than that this was a Gospel Covenant God made with *Abraham*, of which Circumcision was a Seal. *St. Paul* expressly declares it was, *Rom. 4. 11. And he received the Sign of Circumcision, as a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith. And see, Gal. 3. 8.* And a greater than *Paul* confirms it, that Circumcision was not of the Law, even Christ,
John

John 7. 22. *Moses therefore gave you Circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the Fathers,*

Object. *But if Circumcision be not of the Law, but principally an Institution of the Covenant of Grace, Why, say they, doth St. Paul testify again to every Man that is circumcised, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law?*

This Objection will easily be answered, when we consider with whom the Apostle here was disputing; which were the wicked Jews and carnal Ishmaelites, and such who were like to be led aside by them. Such were among them, as it is at this Day among us, Self-righteous Hypocrites, trusting in the Works of the Law, having a Form of Godliness, without the Power. Some boasted of being the Children of Abraham, others of being the Disciples of Moses; and yet both equally overlooking the Promise and Covenant of Grace made to Abraham, through Faith; Not considering, by the Deeds of the Law, as such, no Man could be justified.

But these were not the Errors of all the Jews, but those, and such of those as the Apostles were disputing with here, and to the same Effect in other Places, who blind-

ly trusted in the Law of Works, separate from that Faith, which Circumcision was a Seal of: For all were not Israel that were of Israel, any more among them for being Circumcised, than is among us for being Baptized: For, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called.*

Not but that the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, the true Israelites themselves, were of all People the most essentially obliged to keep the Law of *Moses*, when God joins them under that Legal Dispensation; for Circumcision, the Seal of *Abraham's* Covenant, obliged them to it, as far as they were able.

And that from these two Reasons; First, Because many of these Laws were Moral and Evangelical, especially them of the Ten Commandments. Secondly, The Legal Sacrifices, did very lively prefigure Christ a Saviour. They were as the Apostle Expresses, *Shadows of good things to come*, Heb. 10. 1. And where they fail'd in the Performance of these Laws, strictly of *Moses*, their Faith through the Promise of the Covenant of Grace before made to *Abraham*, was to them as an Anchor to the Soul.

For had not that Covenant God made with *Abraham* been a Covenant of Grace; or had that Covenant been disannull'd when

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that of *Moses*, 430 Years after, was given, the Jews of all People must have been the most miserable.

For the Law, it is plain, and Legal Dispensation of *Moses*, was added as a School-Master, and that chiefly to bring Men to the Knowledge of Sin, and to shew them their own Insufficiency in keeping that Law; that they might through Faith place their Confidence in the promised Seed, which was Christ to come. But as soon as Christ was revealed, and by the Sacrifice of himself upon the Cross, they then were no longer under a School-Master: For then all the Legal Sacrifices ceased. But the Covenant of Grace God made with *Abraham* and his Seed, continued the same, Yesterday, and to Day, and for ever.

My Covenant, saith God, I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my Lips, Psal. 89. 34. So expresses the Holy Ghost by the Mouth of the Blessed Virgin, As he spake to our Fathers, to Abraham, and his Seed for ever, Luke 1. 55, 72. to perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant.

Now pray, What was this Covenant, but the Covenant of Grace, and the very same after Christ that it was before? All the Difference is in the Administration; which

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was to this Effect, *St. Paul* tells them, In the Room of being Circumcised, by that Seal of the Righteousness of Faith in Christ to come, you are now to be buried in Baptism, through the same Faith in Christ already come, *Col. 2. 11. 12.* The Apostle *Paul* expressly tells the *Galatian* Christians, that *if ye be in Christ, then are ye Abraham's Seed*, *Gal. 3. 29.* For we shall be saved (says he) as well as they : That is as much as to say, You are under the same Covenant of Grace, and are now as much the Seed of *Abraham* by Faith, as you were before.

Object. *But if the Covenant of Grace made with Abraham, as before related, be the Gospel Covenant, Why then, say they, is it expressed by the Prophet, Jer. 31. 31. as is related by St. Paul, Heb. 8. of a New Covenant, that God would make with the House of Israel ?*

Ans. Those Texts, 'tis plain, are to be understood as those in *Joel, 2. 28.* in a Way of Eminency of God's manifesting himself more visibly, extraordinarily, and effectually, in the Conversion both of Jews and Gentiles; and in this respect it was new.

Not but that it was new, in relation to the Promised Seed made to *Adam* after

the Fall, or the Manifestation of Christ in the Flesh, which followed the Law of Moses; take it which way we will,

It is in these as in several other Places, Phrases, and Expressions, which are not strictly to be taken. Thereby many not considering, are deceived, and deceive others: To Instance that Text, John 1. 17. *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.* Now this Text cannot strictly be understood, as if Moses preached not the Gospel; for he both wrote of Christ, John 5. 46. and preached the Gospel to the Israelites in the Wilderness, Heb. 4. 6. Otherways what Faith can any Man think, or under what Covenant were these. St. Paul gives a Relation of, in the 11th and 12th Chapter to the Hebrews, but that of the Gospel; except Men will be so absurd as to imagine that there are more Covenants of Grace, and more Gospels than One.

Before I leave this Subject, I am obliged to observe the unreasonable Obstinacy of the Antipedobaptists, in collecting those Texts which require Faith and Repentance, as only relate to the Adult; which they on Purpose bring as Evidence to exclude Infants from Baptism: Which is so fallacious in it self, that any Evidence of the

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like Nature would, I believe, not be allowed in any earthly Court of Judicature. For as it is the sole Prerogative of God to make Laws, and his Wisdom and Goodness to proportion them agreeable to the Capacity of his Creatures. And when he receives Adult Persons, either Jews or Heathens, in Covenant, he expects to receive them in a reasonable prepared State, agreeable to their Capacity, as Adult Persons. And when he receives their Infants in Covenant, he receives them in the Capacity of Infants. When *Abraham* was received into Covenant by Circumcision, he was received as an Adult Believer, but *Isaac* in the Capacity only of an Infant of a Believer. Nor was this Priviledge peculiar to *Abraham's* Natural Seed, but to other Believers of the Gentiles and their Infants, it is plain, *Gen. 27. 23. Exod. 12. 48. Luke 19. 9. Acts 2. 38, 39.* This hath always been the gracious Wisdom and Appointment of God in all Ages. Nor is it at all absurd, any more to say that Infants may be received into Favour and Covenant with God in this World, through the Faith and Obedience of their Parents, than to say that they have Sinned, and once lost the Favour of God, through the Sin of our First Parents.

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The sacred Volumes inform us fully in this, that Infants have always become fatal Sharers with their wicked Parents, of God's Judgment in this World, *Rom. 5. 12. Gen. 6. 7. and 19. 25. Isai. 6. 21. Mat. 24. 19.*

So have they also of the gracious Blessing of God, with their believing and obedient Parents, *Gen. 12. 3. Deut. 7. 13. 28, 3. Prov. 3. 20, 7. Mark 10. 10.* As to God's Proceedings with his Creatures in the other World, that is not the Question. Secret Things belong to God. It is sufficient that God hath told us, that we shall in the other State be accountable only for our own Actions, which ought to silence us from being too inquisitive into his Proceedings in this World. For Instance, where God appoints a strict Institution, we are obliged to obey him, as such, *Thou shalt have no other gods but Me.* And again, where God appoints an Institution of Latitude, we ought to be as careful to obey him according to the Terms of that Latitude, as the other; and especially in this of receiving Infants of Believers into Covenant.

But I shall hasten to a Conclusion; for it would be endless to answer all the unreasonable Quibbles of unreasonable Men: For if it were possible, they would reason every Truth out of Countenance; as
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in this of denying Infants to be in Cove-
nant.

But what Boldness is it for Men thus to call the Wisdom of God in Question, or after this Manner to dispute the Reasonableness of his Institution? As, How an Infant could enter into Covenant? *Deut.* 29. 11, 12. How an Infant could break God's Covenant? *Gen.* 17. 14. How an Infant of a Month old could keep God's Sanctuary? *Numb.* 3. 28. Why *Abraham's* Faith should be required, and necessary before Circumcision, and in *Isaac* Circumcision before Faith? Why Faith should be required in an Adult Jew or Heathen, before Baptism, and Baptism before Faith in their Infants? How an Infant can be said to be made holy, or sanctified, *1 Cor.* 7. 14.

By this way of Reasoning, every Truth may be render'd precarious, and the Wisdom of God disputed and called in Question: For such People may by the same way of Reasoning, as there are some that do urge, Why Water-Baptism is necessary at all? Forasmuch as Water of it self cleanseth not, saith the Apostle: Nor can Baptism, the Seal of the Covenant, signify more than the Covenant it self. And the Covenant it self doth not signify to us, That we have performed the Conditions, but that we are to perform them.

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This was the very Case of the Jews; and so it is of us Christians. Their Circumcision outwardly, without the Circumcision of the Heart after, became to them as Uncircumcision. So in like manner to us, outward Baptism of Water, can never make us real Christians, without that of the Spirit; for without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord. 'Tis he only that endures to the End, that shall be saved: *Therefore let not him that girdeth on the Harness, boast himself as he that putteth it off, 1 King. 20. 11.*

No sooner was Baptism Instituted, but Men began to misimprove the real Ends and Designs of it; which was the Error of some of the Church of *Corinth*, as is too visibly the Error Religion groans under at this Time. They valued themselves upon the outward Ordinance of Baptism, and made that a Snare to them, and an Occasion of their Divisions, which was designed otherways; which occasioned St. *Paul*, when he saw the ill Improvements they made of it, to thank God that he had baptized no more, *1 Cor. 1. 14.*

All that can be said of it, or for it, it is but the first Rudiment of Religion: As a Scholar is first entered into a School, as St. *Paul* expresses, in *Heb. 6. 1.* *Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ,*

Christ, let us go on to Perfection. How foolish would it be for an Army, when they are ready to engage an Enemy in the Field, to fall into Contention about their Entrance into their Prince's Service, and so give an Opportunity for their Enemies to prevail over them? Would not that Prince proclaim them as Rebels, unworthy of his Service? I shall leave our Opposers to make the Application. For how awful and melancholly must be the Case of such, who spend their whole Life in this unhappy Controversy of Baptism; and so rest in this, as to set it up as a Darling of their Sect?

But here I shall draw towards a Conclusion of this Subject, with the Exhortation of our Church, in her Form of Baptism. *Remember always, that Baptism doth represent unto us our Profession: Which is, to follow the Example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him. That as he died and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from Sin, and rise again unto Righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt Affections, and daily proceeding in all Vertue and Godliness of living.*

As for the Mode of Baptism, to say exactly how it was performed by the Apostles, no Man now living, without an Immediate

Revelation, can tell. Some we understand were baptized in Houses, some in Prison, and others in Rivers. But whatever was the most general Practice, whether by dipping the Body, or only the Head: Whether by Emerſion or Effuſion, can be no ways material to us; provided the Inſtitution be an Inſtitution of Latitude: Then the Mode by Emerſion may be very lawful, and that by Effuſion as lawful as the other. Then to what Purpoſe is all our diſputing? That this Inſtitution was an Inſtitution of Latitude, ſo held and practiced by the Primitive Church, cannot be deny'd, and who certainly were the beſt Judges in this Caſe. And of the ſame Opinion is the National Church of *England*. *Acts* 8. 36, 37. and 10. 47.

And 'tis reaſonable they ſhould, as to the Quantity of Water made uſe of: For as Water Baptiſm is of a General Concern to all Believers, all Believers have an equal Right to it. For God hath excluded none, whoſe Heart is prepared to receive Chriſt. But for any to aſſert, that Emerſion is the one and only Mode of Baptiſm, may with the ſame Confidence affirm, that all the Faithful that believe in Chriſt have not an equal Right to Baptiſm with others; which is a Doctrine contrary both to Scripture and Reason. For what is it that excludes a Man from

from Baptism but Unbelief? But according to these Men's Doctrine, bodily Infirmities exclude all Men, Women and Children from this Ordinance: The Sick, the Decrepid, the Bed-rid; all that are under Bonds or Imprisonments, and many others under the like Circumstances, too long here to be inserted.

What an uncommon Degree of Zeal is observable in most of the Antipædobaptists, particularly about the Mode of it? As if the whole of Religion depended upon it: That to be dipt was to be saved, but to be baptiz'd any other way was to be damned; or that Religion was breathing out her last. But as *Gerson* saith concerning Women, whose Affection commonly outruns their Understanding; who affect more than they know, and are then most inflamed when they have least Light; so it is generally of groundless Fancies, and ill built Opinions.

We may judge of Doctrines as we do of Men: Those that tend to hard and uncharitable Thoughts of their Fellow Christians, to prejudicial and mischievous Effects against them, to the drawing as it were a Circle of Salvation round themselves, and leaving out all others to be damn'd, or by Miracles to be saved. Such Tenets are so harsh and offensive to Charity, and Brotherly

therly Love among Christians, that we may be confident they are not founded upon the Scriptures, but on the perverting of them.

I wish I could say, we had not the same Reason to make the same or the like Reflection on some particular Persons of the *Established Church*, who seem to act from the same Principles, by contrary Extreams. Such are those Ministers who refuse to baptize by Dipping, such who conscientiously desire it. Such Men act more inexcusable than the former; forasmuch as they have solemnly engaged themselves when they were ordained, to act conformable to all the Orders, Canons, and Injunctions of that Church, of which this is one; as we read in the Rubrick in the Common-Prayer-Book, of Publick Baptism. The Words are these; *If they shall certify him that the Child may well endure it, he shall dip it in the Water discreetly and warily, saying, &c.* I have heard some Men in the Pulpit pronounce Separation from the *Established Church* both dangerous and damnable; but should I hear it from such a Man as aforesaid, I profess I should be doubtful whether he thought as he spoke; when at the same Time I see he sets a Soul at so little Value, as not to step out of his way, when it is his Duty, and in his Power to

be Instrumental to save it, either in this, or in any other of the like Actions. For faith the Parent, except ye dip my Child I must separate: And Schism is damnable, saith the Minister.

Now the only way at once to put a Stop to this Controversy, and what in a great Measure would be the Death of that Sect of Antipædobaptists, is for both Ministers and Members of the Church of *England*, to act and practice upon our own Principles; that is, to dip where there is no excuse of Sickness or other Impediment. Whoever therefore would prevent their Children from falling into the Hands of Rebaptizers after their Death, or perhaps to their great Sorrow before, is what they ought well to consider: For it is not the Subjects of Baptism, but the Mode, that gives a Cause and a Handle in supporting that Sect. The Truth of which is acknowledged by Mr. *Wall*, the Author of the History of Infant Baptism, and all others who have had the most Experience in the Controversies and Humours of such People. Therefore I think there cannot be too much Care taken in a lawful way, to prevent the Innocent falling into the Hands of such Deceivers, who with fair Words and fine Speeches deceive the Ignorant. For common Experience shews us, such Passions work more smartly

smartly upon the Vulgar, than Reason or Truth; especially when the Word Damnation is fixt upon the Point, as generally is in this; that is, to be buried all over in Water in Baptism, without which there's no Salvation: When at the same Time there is no one Text in all the New Testament hath so in Express Words commanded, nor any certain Example exactly how it was done, This speaking perverse things to frighten the ignorant, is the exact Maxim of the Church of Rome, in that leading Tenet of *Transubstantiation*, pretended from that Text, *John 6. 53.* Without which there is, say they, no Salvation.

Before I conclude, I earnestly recommend the serious Consideration to the Episcopal Churches in this Country, that they would erect Fonts in every Church, for the convenient Dipping the Children of these unhappy People, if possible to reclaim them, and bring them into the Bosom of the Church. Which cannot, I presume, offend any in the Church that is otherwise minded. This is certainly no more than what our Church allows, and such a charitable Compliance as the Gospel requires in undetermined Cases. On the other Side, I shall conclude in the Words of that pious and good Man Mr. *Burkitt*, in the same Controversy, which they would do well to consider of.

“ For

“ For a Close of this Argument concern-
“ ing the Sinfulness of Re-baptizing, allow
“ me, I pray you, Liberty in the Name of
“ my Great Master, and for the Honour of
“ his Holy Institutions, which have been
“ so shamefully prostituted by some of you
“ lately in our Neighbourhood, to expostu-
“ late the Case with such of you as have
“ submitted to be baptiz'd over again: Sirs,
“ I beseech you seriously to consider both
“ the Sin committed against God, and the
“ Scandal given to good Men; by renoun-
“ cing your former Baptism, you have re-
“ nounc'd your first Dedication to God, and
“ your former Relation to Christ: You
“ have disown'd that ever you were Mem-
“ bers of his Body: You have prophaned a
“ solemn Ordinance of God, and taken his
“ Holy Name in vain: You have condemn'd
“ all the Reformed Churches throughout
“ the World, who decry this Practice of
“ yours as an Abomination; consider, I be-
“ seech you, how you have fallen, and
“ repent.

“ The Way and Manner of applying the
“ Water in Baptism, is not positively deter-
“ mined in the holy Scriptures: It cannot
“ be gather'd either from the Signification
“ of the Word, or from the Significancy
“ of the Ceremony, or from the Command
“ of Christ: Not from the Signification of
the

“ the Original Word, for that signifies *to*
 “ *wash*, as well as *to dip*; not from the Sig-
 “ nificancy of the Ceremony, for the pour-
 “ ing out of Water on the Person bap-
 “ tiz’d, is as significative as the pouring out
 “ of the Blood of Christ, and the pouring
 “ forth the Spirit of Christ upon the Chri-
 “ stian, (which is the Thing signified in Bap-
 “ tism) as Dipping can be. And farther;
 “ We meet with no Command from Christ
 “ to evince the Necessity either of Dip-
 “ ping or Sprinkling: We are requir’d to
 “ baptize with Water, in the Name of the
 “ Father, &c. but we find no Command ei-
 “ ther for the Measure and Quantity of
 “ the Water, or for the Manner of ap-
 “ plying the Water in Baptism, any more
 “ than we find for the Quantity of Bread,
 “ or the Quality of Wine, in the Lord’s
 “ Supper.

“ I should not trouble this Auditory with
 “ the Signification of the Original Word,
 “ which we render *to baptize*, did not the
 “ *Anabaptists* confidently assert, that it al-
 “ ways signifies to dip, or plunge a Person
 “ or Thing wholly under Water; or at
 “ least, that Dipping or Plunging is the
 “ primary Signification of the Word; which
 “ is a great Mistake: For the primitive
 “ Word βαπτίζω, (from whence comes βαπτισμός)
 “ signifies to dye, or to give a new Colour,

" a Metaphor taken from a Dyer's Fat. And
 " altho' I am not fond of Notions gather'd
 " from Metaphorical Expressions, I will ad-
 " venture to say for once, that the Meta-
 " phor may serve not unfitly to remind us
 " of our Priviledge in Baptism, whereby our
 " Souls are made receptive of a new Colour,
 " by being imbued with the Tincture of that
 " Faith which we are baptiz'd into. And
 " as for the derivative Word *Βαπτίζω*,
 " sometimes it signifies to Dip or plunge,
 " sometimes to Wash or Cleanse: Thus,
 " *Hebr. 9. v. 10*, we read of divers Washings
 " under the Law; in the Original it is
 " divers Baptisms. Now what were those
 " Washings but Sprinklings? Sometimes
 " *Blood* was sprinkled, sometimes *Water* was
 " poured forth: No Persons were Dipped
 " or plunged in *Blood*, yet those Sprink-
 " ings are call'd Baptisings. Thus also
 " in *St. Mark 7. ver. 4*. *The Pharisees eat*
 " *not except they Wash*: In the Original
 " it is, *except they be Baptiz'd*. Now, the
 " Manner of Washing before Meat is suffi-
 " ciently known not to be by Dipping, but
 " by pouring *Water*: See *2 Kings 3. v. 11*.
 " *Elisha poured Water on the hands of Elijah*.
 " We read also of their Baptisms, (or)
 " Washings of Beds and Tables many times
 " a Day, which if done by Dipping, be-
 " sides many other Inconveniences, it would
 " have

" have made the Labour of the *Jews* in-
 " tolerable, and the Burthen insupportable.
 " If then the Word (*Baptize*) be a Word
 " of Latitude, and large signification; if
 " it signifies as well to Sprinkle and Wash,
 " as to plunge and Dip, then for you to
 " build an Article of Faith upon the Sig-
 " nification of the Word, and to condemn
 " our Baptism as null and void, when the
 " Subject baptiz'd is Wash'd, though not
 " Dipp'd and plung'd, is unreasonably Weak,
 " and to all Wise Men utterly uncon-
 " vincing.

And tho' indeed it be true, as is not de-
 ny'd, that *John* the Baptist and the Disci-
 ples of Christ did frequent those Rivers,
 as of *Jordan*, and other Places in those
 Times, in their retired Solemnitys for Bap-
 tizing, before our Saviour suffered; is no
 more than what was Customary with the
 Jews to practice under their Legal Puri-
 fications, perpetually frequenting those Ri-
 vers in washing themselves and their Cloaths,
 as also in their baptizing Profelytes to the
 Jews, as the Custom was in those hot
 Countrys: Which how it can be any de-
 terminate Rule to us, any more than of
 their holding Publick Assemblys for Wor-
 ship, in the open Fields; who having nei-
 ther Temples nor publick Houses at their
 Command, sufficient to contain their Num-
 bers.

bers. Or what Rule can it be to us, that some were Baptized in Rivers, when there were others we know were baptized other-ways; as *Annanias*, in all Probability, was baptized in his Lodging, sick and weak, having fasted three whole Days, *Acts* 9. 18, 19. and the Jayler and his Family, which *St. Paul* could not reasonably be in a Condition, as we may perceive by his Stripes and Sores, to carry them at the dead Time of the Night to Rivers or Ponds, *Acts* 16. 33. And as little a Probability is there, that three Thousand could be baptized by plunging in one Day; and I think much less Probability is there to think, that *John* the Baptist himself could have Strength to baptize all those Multitudes that came to him, by plunging the whole Body in water. Nay, he must have exceeded all Mankind, or his very Limbs, in so long a Course of Time, must have been numb. But allowing it probable, that they were baptiz'd by plunging the whole Body, yet there is a strong Probability of the other Side, to believe in the Contrary; of which Numbers of good Christians have differed in these Points, and yet have not seperated. Let therefore such take Care of either Side, how they advance an Institution upon any Right of their own Pleasure, when it is in its own Nature indifferent. This was what God detected in

the false Prophets, in saying, *Thus and thus saith the Lord;* when *they* Lord by the Prophet Ezek. 5. 13. declared, *never came into his Mouth.* These things you would do well to consider of, my Friends.

SECT. IV.

Rom. 2. 28, 29.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

Heb. 6. 2.

ANOTHER cause of the Church Divisions is Mens erecting Fundamentals, at their pleasure, without any Foundation, or at least overvaluing many things which in themselves are highly to be esteem'd. For when we make them more than they are, we in effect make them less than they are, and at last nothing, and of no Use at all. Nay, we may make that a snare to us which was designed for a help. And to mention no more now, That of water Baptism, which it is to be feared, the greatest Number of Professors have little more to prove their Title to Heaven, but that they are Baptized, and rest in that.

This one thing I cannot pass over in Silence, which is of adult Persons, as is common

common among us, at Twenty or Thirty Years of Age, to suffer themselves to be baptized; or if in their Infancy, to sit down at those Years unconcerned in coming to the Lord's Supper, as if it was none of their Business, is such a Mystery of Hypocrisy and Delusion, as is not to be accounted for: Or what such People can think of themselves, or that they are ever the more in the Favour of God, for their being baptized, and at those Years, without coming to the Lord's Supper, or both, without living a Life of Holiness, is what they ought well to consider. It is a dangerous thing for Men thus to presume by such lame and external Shadows to think to impose upon God, and thus to trifle with the Almighty; for all that we read of in the New Testament that were baptized of the Adult, continued in Fellowship of Breaking of Bread and Prayer, in all holy Conversation and Godliness. *Acts* 2. 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47.

The Grand Pretence of most People for their neglecting of this Duty, is, from that Passage of *St. Paul*, *1 Cor.* 11. 29. for fear of eating or increasing their own Damnation: And the Truth of it is, they have Reason so to think, according to the common Lives of Christians. But then at the same Time they ought not to put a Cheat upon themselves,

selves, to think they are ever the safer in not coming there. If they think it is not their Duty, why do they not go to the *Quakers*? And if they think it is their Duty, as a positive Command it is of Christ, then their own Consciences will witness against them: For if they are sincere Professors, they need no more be afraid to come to this Ordinance than the primitive Christians; but if they are otherways, why do they read the Bible, if not with an Intent to practice what they read? It will but increase their own Damnation. Or why do they worship God, either publickly or privately? For *the Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination to the Lord*: For *the Hope of the Hypocrite shall certainly perish*, whether they receive the Sacraments, or whether they do not. In vain it is for Men to pretend to Religion, except they act upon Principles of Integrity; for *without Holiness, saith St. Paul, no Man shall see the Lord*. Dangerous is the State of Lukewarm Christians: Dreadful was the Sentence God pronounced against the Churches of *Sardis* and *Laodicea*, except they repented, *Rev. 3. 1, 15*. I pray God it is not now the Case of most Churches among us.

How apt are we in way of Ridicule, to pity the poor Heathen for their setting up wooden

wooden Idol Gods, not considering how many as ridiculous we have set up among us, and fashioned out according to the Similitude of our own fond Imaginations. For who can be so ignorant as not to know, that those very Externals of Religion, the outward Sacraments, and Circumstances of Worship enjoyned by God, and perform'd most exactly by Men; yet if they be not driven to that end for which they were commanded, that it is so far from finding acceptance with God, that it is odious in his sight. *Isai.* 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. *Isai.* 29. 13. & 66. 3. *Amos* 5. 21, 22, 23.

An Instance of this, as well true as awful, was that of the Jews in the time of the Prophet *Jeremiah*. They trusted wholly in outward Performances and Externals of Religion, and did not question but that God was so much in love with them for them, that they would atone for all the Abominations and iniquities of their hearts and lives: Which caused God to exclaim against them and his own Ordinances themselves. And have we not as much reason at this day, to dread the like Consequence may befall us, and his resentment of those outward performances of ours; as they are now not only become a Bone of Contention, but in a manner are

are set up as Idols to be worshiped? And what Reason Men have to set so great a value upon them, I am yet to learn. God is a Spirit, and he will be worshiped in Spirit and in truth. *Mat. 23. 13. 19. 24. John 4. 23, 24.*

All the Legal Sacrifices, with ten thousand Rivers of Oyl, could not make up a just and merciful Jew. *Mic. 6. 7. Psal. 50. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.*

No more can all the most exact external Performances, of themselves, make up a just and merciful Christian. For what were Blood and Smoak? May I add, What is Bread and Water, washing and eating, to the God of Spirits? For we cannot think that God commands those things for any Goodness in themselves, but through his wisdom was pleased to appoint them to help our Infirmities. For the most we can make of them is, but as the cloathing of a man, to a man; the Bark to the Tree; or as a shadow to the Substance. For what external of Religion was there ever commanded by God, but at some time hath been omitted, and dispensed with? Both Sacrifices, Circumcision, and the Sabbath were dispensed with. *Psal. 50. 8. Josh. 5. 5. Mark 2. 23, 24, 25.*

But where do we find that Holiness, the true Spiritual Worship, was ever dispensed

dispensed with, but was ever in force? Who ever was dispensed with in a moral positive Law? Who ever had an Indulgence granted him, to defraud, or oppress his Brother, to be cruel or unmerciful to him? Who ever was unjust on Earth, by Grant and Prerogative from Heaven? And much less Reason have we in these days to imagine that God hath altered his Mind. *Isai. Chap. 58.*

I should be glad and rejoyce, if in this Point I were mistaken, and that it were only the Error of the Jews alone to forget true and inward Sanctity, and to trust upon outward Worship, Pomp and Formality: But sad experience may convince, that the same Errors that misled the Jews under those weak and beggarly Elements, have in these our Days found Admittance and Harbour in the Breasts of Christians. What are all the External of Religion in comparison, so essential to the Church Universal, as Piety, and those internal Breathings of the Soul: For suppose I were in the Wilderness, did my Soul lay, as *David* speaks, among Lions, yet might I dwell in Christ. Did Persecution seal up the Church Doors, and leave no Power or place to exercise in those External; yet might I enjoy a constant Communication with my God. Otherwise, why was their Faith com-

mended, who wandred about in Sheep Skins, in Desarts, Mountains, Dens and Caves of the Earth. *Heb. Chap. 11. Psal. 57. 4. Deut. 4. 29, 30. 1 King. 19. 18.*

And on the contrary, vain and foolish are all those who live under the Enjoyment of the External of Religion, and can so rest in them, as to think, they can atone for an ill spent Life, or that any Congregation can be a Sanctuary to shelter such Wretches, or to absolve them from their Sins.

Should God send a Prophet to us now with the same words as aforesaid he did once to the Jews, How would the Voice surprise us? Even to question with us for doing his Command in those external Sacraments and Ordinances, and tell us, he never gave us any such Command. Because he never gave it us to this end. *Will he be pleased with Burnt-Offerings; saith the Prophet to the Jews. No, He hath shewed thee, O Man! what is good. To do Justice, love mercy, & walk humbly with thy God. Mic. 6. 8.*

May we add, Will he not now be pleased with Water Baptism, Breaking of Bread? Is not this Religion, to be zealous for these and all other External? A more excellent way *St. Paul* hath shewed us, *1 Cor. 12. 31.* and *St. James*, *Pure Religion and undefiled before*

before God, is this, to visit the Fatherless and the Widows, and to keep himself unspotted from the World, Jam. 13. The great Misfortune is, most People call Religion by those things that are not. And many of those things that are, advance them beyond their proper Bounds. Most of those Controversies among us are of so little Concern to Religion, that they are both shameful and scandalous, as particularly, concerning the Surplice, Ornaments, the Cross after Baptism, Godfathers and Godmothers: For however necessary the matter might have been before the Establishment of Christianity, it cannot be now among us, but to the contrary; especially as they become Matters of Conscience, and Bone of Contention: And as they was the first Cause of Offence, and the rise of most of our Divisions, since the Reformation. And it is very awful to think, that as it hath had so ill an Effect, that all this time it should not Work some Impressions on the Hearts of such who are in authority in the Church, who may be instrumental in so Glorious a work, as to make up those breaches, towards promoting the peace of Jerusalem. Let them look to it, there will be a sharp reckoning, to such who do not all in their power towards
 Mar. 18. 7. Rom. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 10. 23, 24.
 18. 13.

It would be a great and necessary Point of Wisdom in us, to look back and take a View of God's Proceedings with Mankind, of Judgment and Mercy. What proved fatal to them may be a Warning to us. Look we over all the Sacred Volumes, and the Histories succeeding, to this time, of Jews or Christians; So long as they feared the Lord and served him, and held the Truth in Righteousness; so long as the Priests Lips preserved Knowledge, and what they preached ed themselves, and what the People were taught, they practised, God was with them and blessed them; their Priests and Bishops were had in Honour; their Office was held sacred; no man durst take it upon him. God was pleased with their Worship; and his Precepts were made plain to them. *Then saith God, that honoureth me, saith God, I will honour him. If any one will do his Will, he shall know the Doctrine, saith our Saviour, whether it be of God, Joh. 7. 17.*

But how different was the Case, and what were the Causes at sundry times, of God changing his blessings into cursings, few can be ignorant. As to the Jews, why their Worship and Sacrifices were abhorred by God, their Priests made contemptible I will not say, that our Case at this time doth not look like it. It is to be feared God

Judgment

Judgments are heavy upon us, and we discern it not, *Mal. 2. 8, 9. Jer. 8. 7.*

S E C T. V.

1 Tim. 1. 5, 6.
2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.
2 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

WELL is that Scripture fulfilled, Examples are more prevailing than Precepts: For how many plain Precepts of the Gospel, both held and professed by the primitive Christians, long before the Corruptions of the Church of Rome, and conformed to by our first Reformers, that are now by several Sects publickly disowned and made matter of Scorn and contempt.

For instance, that of Episcopacy, the two Sacraments, those of Baptism and the Lords Supper, reading the Holy Scriptures, and singing of Psalms in Publick, with a composed form of Prayers: All which we are manifestly taught by our Saviour and his Apostles, both by Precepts and Examples. What madness is it therefore, because most men have only a Form of Godliness, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness, to think this

this is an argument that the truth it self is of less validity? Therefore, let not any Person infer from any thing I have expressed was a design to betray (or by consequence) any plain Precepts of the Gospel. For what God hath joyned together, let no man separate. For he that breaks the least of these Commandments, saith our Lord, and teaches men so to do, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. And ye are my Disciples, saith he, if ye do whatsoever I command you. He that refuses me, and receiveth not my Word, hath one that judgeth him. The Word that I have spoken, it shall Judge him at the Last Day. Mat. 5. 19. John 15. 14. Luke 8. 46. John 12. 48.

Yet all Truths, as I have shewn, at the same time are not equal; There is a vast Difference betwixt the Internals and Externals of Religion; yet we ought to be very careful how we slight or put the least Commandment upon any plain Precept, relating either to the external Order, Ordinances, Sacraments, or ministrations; or how we judge of their Usefulness or Expediency, by our shallow Reasoning. 2 Kings 5. 11, 12, 13.

It is from this Maxim, that the plainest Precepts of the Gospel are rendered dark and obscure, from whence many precarious Queries are hatch'd: For instance, Why Laying

Laying on of Hands, and that by a Bishop, are more necessary to a due Qualification of a Gospel Minister of Jesus Christ, than that of a Presbyter? A second, Why that of a Presbyter, more than a Lay Elder? A third, Why Laying on of Hands are necessary at all? And if this Maxim will hold good against one Precept, I can't see why it may not hold good against all, especially what relates to Externals of Religion, whether Sacraments or Ordinances. So thereupon we may conclude, the Quaker of all Sects acts the most uniform, and the most orthodox.

But the plain truth of it is, our Saviour and his Apostles were of one Opinion, and they of another. The Apostle *Paul* thought it necessary to send *Timothy* to *Ephesus*, and *Titus* to *Crete*, to ordain Elders in every City, by Laying on of Hands, by Virtue of an Authority only invested in them for that end. But according to those modern Maxims, he might have saved himself the trouble in sending them, and they in going.

Heb. 5. 4. 5. *Luke* 6. 13. *Acts* 14. 23. *Titus* 1. 5. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

But as the Laws of Christ are to be our Standard and Rule of our Obedience, we ought to consider what pleases God, and not what pleases our selves. And that the Worship we are to pay to God is Spiritual Worship, yet the Instruments of our Bodies

Bodies are adapted to more glorious Ends and Designs, than to be passive, and to stand in his Presence like Cyphers. The same Word that teaches us to worship God in Spirit, teaches us to worship him in truth. And the same word that teaches us to worship him in our Souls, teaches us to Worship him in our Bodys. To come into his presence, to bow down before him, and kneel before the Lord our maker: To open our mouths, that we may shew forth his praise, This practice we are taught both by precepts and Examples, of Patriarchs and Prophets, our Saviour and his Apostles. Men, Women and Children, and Angels and Cherubins, all proclaim this fundamental, That it is the duty of all Nations and families of the Earth to worship God, and serve him in our Souls and bodies, both publick and private: Always to be thankful for his mercies; whether we eat or drink, to give Glory unto his name. *John* 4. 23, 24. *1 Cor.* 6. 20. *Psa.* 95. 6. *Psa.* 55. 17. *Psa.* 119. 164. *Dan.* 6. 10. *Mat.* 26. 41. *Luke* 18. 1. *Gen* 18. 19. *Josh.* 24. 15.

This is what is so Natural and Essential, that nothing less than a Spirit of delusion can discountenance or contemn the practice: Yet there are some particular Sects among us, of which there's a very melancholy relation of this nature, which is obvious to
any

any who have the least knowledge of them; And they are those whose Principle it is to teach in defiance of the express word of God, that all Forms of Prayer are unlawful. Our Lord says, *when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.* But they say, *When ye pray, say not Our Father, but something else.* One pernicious consequence that attends this Doctrine, is, the discouraging of private and family Prayers: And as private and family Devotion hath a great tendency to promote the kingdom of Christ upon Earth; on the contrary, the other must have a quite different effect. For howsoever lawful Extempore Prayer may be in those who have a Gift to express themselves decent and orderly, as becomes poor Mortals in the presence of God; yet by common experience we know, the greatest number of Christians whose duty it is to live in this practice, have not; especially the ignorant and Youth of different ages, as also numbers of good people of a more knowing Capacity, that require the help of others. It is for this and no doubt that God hath been pleased to grant a Latitude in this practice, and to encourage us in it by his Sons command and example. *Luke 11. 2. John ch. 17. Phil. 4. 6. Thes. 5. 17. 1 Tim. 2. 8. & 4. 5. Job. 27. 10. Gen. 10. 21. Ps. 50. 22, 23.*

M

What

What the effect this principle hath produced, and the number of prayerless Families it has made in the world, we in this place in some degree have the experience to know by its votaries. What avowed Enmity and contempt do most of them discover against family Devotion, refusing not only to join in Family Prayer and at a Common Table with others, but give just Grounds to mistrust, that they themselves make no Conscience of it. I should be Glad if in this point I were mistaken; but this I shall Leave to the Determination of others, and their own Conscience, which to God and themselves is as a thousand Witnesses. 2 Cor. 10. 12. Luk. 6. 46. Isa. 65. 5. Luk. 18. 9.

It is a very awful thing to think, that so fundamental a Practice should be disregarded by any People who bear the Name of Christians. They may pretend what they will, but they little deserve the Name. *They have a Zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. They make their Boast of God but in Works they deny him:* For their uncharitable Actions towards Men are Manifest; their Actions towards God are boisterous and ungrateful. 1 Cor. 10. 30, 31, 32. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

In vain is it for Men to boast of this Knowledge, and to show a flaming Zeal for God

and in daily perusing his Laws, and ever
disputing about Religion, while at the same
time they never set themselves to practice it.
What if I should read a thousand times over
those or the like precepts, *When ye pray, say,
Our Father. Watch and pray. When thou pray-
est, enter into thy Closet. Men ought always
to pray, and not to faint. Whether ye eat or
drink do all to the Glory of God; For they
are sanctified by Prayer,* and yet live in an un-
concerned state of Life, as to this practice,
both as to my self and family? What is
this less than professing to know God, but
works to deny him? *Job 27. 8. 9. 10. Jer.
10. 25. Luk. 11. 2. Mat. 26. 41. Mat. 6. 6.
Luk. 13. 1. 1 Cor. 10 31.*

To live in a constant Communion with
God by Prayers, through a feeling Sense of
his Love to us, and ours to him, is the
greatest Blessing we can enjoy on this side
Heaven, and the greatest Ornament to any
Family: For every such Family becomes a
little Church, and every Person in it a mem-
ber. This was the Practice of the Primitive
Christians; especially at the least, every
morning and Evening, to make their Prayers
to God, and sing a Psalm. Therefore let
such who are Contemners of a Form of
Prayer, take care they don't lose the Spirit
of Prayer. *Psal. 65. 2. Psal. 55. 16, 17.*

We may be well assured, the Neglect of this Duty by Men professing Christianity, must proceed from some illegal Warrant and false Principles, or a carnal Spirit of Infidelity, or both. It is indeed very surprizing to think, what strange Apprehensions some People have of Religion, and of their Duty to God : By their Practice they shew as if it only consisted in some few Systems of dry and barren Disputations ; or to give God their Presence some few Hours in Publick one Day in a Week, with some small Degree of Reverence. And how many of the Hearers of several Congregations with no more Expressions than two or three *Amen's*, if that, return to their Habitation unconcerned, and go no more to any Private or Family Duty all the week ; and perhaps live in this Course all their Life ; and this is what they call Religion : Sit down to eat, lie down in their Beds, rise up unconcerned as to any Duty they pay to God as the brut Beasts, that are void of all Sense of the Goodness and Providence of God, and their Dependance upon him, Phil. 4, 6. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Of these Sort there are some that are too proud, and ashamed to bow their Knees to the Almighty ; others too holy, or at least reckon themselves in so great a State of Perfection, they think they have no need of especial

especially to ask Pardon for what they are not guilty of, that is, Sin. Some there are that neglect this Duty because they see some others that do not profit by it, who keep up a Form of Godliness, without the Power of it in their Lives. This is an Objection indeed that deserves no Answer. However, by the same Rule of Reason, they ought neither to eat nor drink, because some abuse those Creatures to an Excess of Gluttony and Drunkenness. Others again out of Conscience neglect this Duty, as they are taught from their Teachers and Principles, not to join in Prayer or Family Devotion with any but their own Sect, and not to use any Form of Prayers, and herein find themselves insufficient to express words suitable on such a solemn Occasion in an extempore way: So that by the Difficulty and Uncomfortableness under their Condition, having no other Recourse, they lay it aside. This is the Case, it is to be feared, of most of these unhappy People. *1 Tim. 6. 3, 4. Job. 15. 4. Psal. 50. 23.*

In short, whoever neglects this Duty, except upon extraordinary Occasions, must be either downright Hypocrites, Unbelievers, or misguided from some malignant Principles: This is the very Character described by *Job* of a Hypocrite: *Will he delight him-
self*

self in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God? Job 27. 10. Which is as much as to say, He will not: His Religion is not all of a Piece, it is by Fits and Starts, as he is sometimes frightened into it by God's Judgments, and at other Times moved from some carnal Motive of Applause, Interest, or Love of a Party, or to be seen of Men, Mat. 6. 2, 6. And the plain Truth of this will appear, were we strictly to trace the Actions of most Professors. For instance, With what an unbecoming Posture, not to say loud and noisy, do we see some Men distinguish themselves in the Church in their Responses, to the great Scandal of the Church, as also the Disturbance of those near them? And this they think is Religion, which indeed appears to be far from it. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth, Joh. 4. 24. To this Man will I look, saith the Lord, even to him that is of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my Word, Isai. 66. 2.

On the contrary, what an uncommon Excess of Zeal appears in many of other Persecutions, for the promoting some external Tenets of each Party? With what Eagerness shall we perceive them ranging in Crouds many Miles to an Ordination, a General Meeting, or to see a Person dipt, or baptiz'd

baptiz'd in their way, as they would have it: But this is what looks tolerable. After all these Solemnitys, and Shows of Zeal and Devotion, in the midst of all this Noise, trace them home to their Familys and private Retirements and Closets, as little there we shall see, it is to be feared, as in such who live without God in the World; of which we have a sad and awful Denunciation by the Prophet *Jeremiah*: *Pour out thy Fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the Families that call not on thy Name*, Jer. 10. 25. For thus saith the Lord by the Prophet *Azariah*, *If ye seek him, he will be found of you, but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you*. 2 Cor. 15. 2. Psal. 5. 3. Psal. 55. 17. Dan. 6. 10. Mat. 26. 41. Mark 13. 33. Eph. 6. 18. Phil. 4. 6. Isai. 55. 6, 7.

It is also a Grand Mistake in any to think, that the Spirit of Prayer consists only or chiefly in an Extempore way of praying: For who knows not, or at least may have so much Charity to believe, that there is many good Christians that have the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Grace, and the Spirit of Prayer, that have not an Extempore Gift of Utterance? On the contrary, How many Persons are there whose Gifts are extraordinary this way, whose hearts at the same time are possessed with a Spirit of Pride, Self-love, Vain Glory and Uncharitableness? 1 Cor. 14. 15.

Nothing

Nothing in these times more common, and nothing more dangerous, than for men to draw Conclusions of the spiritual State of themselves and others from such Maxims, That God is in love with them on the account of such Personal Qualities, as a fluent Tongue, a ready wit, a good memory, an Historical Knowledge. How many Sacrifices are daily made, and Hosannas proclaimed among us by the ignorant gaping multitude to these false Idols. 1 Cor. 3. 3, 4.

For what though a man should speak as the Apostle expresses, *with the tongue of men and Angels, and tho' he should have the Gift of Propheying, and should understand all mysteries and knowledge, yet without Charity he will be but as a sounding brass and a tinkling Cymbal.* His faith though never so strong, will only be accounted Presumption. 1 Cor. 13. 2.

The Conclusion that we must draw of the spiritual state of our selves and others, and who it is that prays by the Spirit, is to determine from other superior Qualities than those of a fluent Tongue; which is, by the Fruits of the Spirit in the works of truth and Righteousness; a Renunciation of the whole man in Obedience to both Tables of the Law. And if those things be in us and remain, we may then safely conclude,

we have the Spirit of Christ, and consequently the Spirit of Prayer; whether we pray Extempore, or by Form, provided the Form be found and good: For what less is most of the Extempore Prayers deliver'd in the world; but a Form to the People, and the chiefest part to him that prays. *Rom.* 14. 18.

And as for the Forms used in the Church of *England*, nothing but Prejudice can defame them. The greatest Man living may sooner find Faults than mend them: And there is nothing in her Doctrine and Ministry, but what are truly Primitive. I grant indeed there is a Mixture of wicked Men among them; the truth of which I believe every Society have equal Cause of themselves to complain. What then? Shall a whole order of Men be expos'd to contempt, as a late Author hath shamefully done, for their sake? The Apostles are not to be the less esteemed because *Judas* was a Traitor, nor the Prophets because *Balaam* was one. *Act.* 1. 17, 18. *Jud.* 11.

It is true, the best of them are but Men, and have their Failings; but they are such as the Brightness of the Christian Religion hath been sufficiently display'd in their Lives and Works to recommend them, except to an ungrateful World. So shall I ever
N esteem

esteem those Ministers and Members, who live up to the Principles of that Church, to be not only the best Members of Christ, and the soundest Branch of the Catholick Church, but to have the brightest Notions of the Christian Religion.

Whereas nothing but Men prepossessed with prejudice, can rationally say Gods Glory is so much concerned in the Administration of his Worship, rather in some other way than in that now practised in the Church of *England*; save those little things before observed, which are indeed indifferent of themselves, but is what the more moderate Dissenters plead for.

And Secondly, That we are obliged to have a special regard to a National Church, both Scripture and Reason on sundry Accounts will teach us. Nor can we separate from her with safety, except it be for Idolatry, or some gross and dangerous Impositions. For small things are more tolerable and less sinful, than to break the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. And to this we have our Saviours Word, his own Example, and his Apostles to justify us. For our Saviour in all his Life time never separated from the Jewish Church, nor gave any Incouragement to his Disciples so to do, but the contrary. Neither did the Apostles after his

Death

Death give any Encouragement of Separation from the Christian Church, notwithstanding the Jews were very corrupt, and so were the Church of *Corinth*, and the Seven Churches of *Asia*. It is true, they all bore their Testimony against their Errors and Lives, as it is every good Man's Duty to bear his Testimony against sin at this Day, of those of the Church of *England*, wherein they are guilty, but not after that sordid manner, as is done by too many of the Dissenters: For whoever that will but impartially cast their eyes into most of their Books of Controversies, will find the Bulk of them taken up in personal Reflections, and with no other Design. I wish we had not Reason to mistrust them, to prejudice their people against the Church: Not but I believe there are others among them that act upon better Principles.

There is a large field in a National Church: Malitious designing Men need never want an opportunity of singling out some wicked Members, to answer their malitious purposes, whether to expose the Church, its Principles, or the whole Society of its Professors. Neither is their any Institution of Christ but may be exposed to Ridicule and Contempt, by framing crafty and mischievous Comparisons.

For

For instance, There is no part of Worship that God hath commanded, but some superstitious or barbarous Nation hath Symbolized with; for they had their Altars, Temples; both sang and prayed, and bowed their knee to *Baal*: But does that argue that we shall refuse to do the like to the God of heaven, in any other or the like cases, provided it is according to the Truth? And in these things we symbolize with Christ and his Apostles; which certainly betrays a great Share of Malice or Ignorance in the Authors and Abettors of many scandalous Pamphlets writ in this Strain, and especially one lately Reprinted in this Country. But as *Solomon* expresses it, *The fool believes every thing, but the Prudent looks well to his goings*, Prov. 14. 15. Math. 5. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

But notwithstanding the Disorders and Corruptions that have happened in the Christian Church under an Establishment; yet we have solid Grounds in the Scripture to believe the Designs of God was to Propagate the World to Christianity in a National way. This was God's Promise to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 4, 5. & 12. 2, 3. Rom. 4. 16, 17. *Isa.* 52. 15. *Ezek.* 36. 25. *Isa.* 55. 5. And ratified by our Saviour, *Mat.* 21. 43. & 28. 19. *Isa.* 49. 23. And many other Places plainly infer to the same design and purpose. *Jer.* 4. 2. *Zech.* 2. 11. *Isa.* 2. 2, 3, 4.

Our

Our Saviour says indeed, his Kingdom is not of this World; but that doth not infer but that his Kingdom is in this World, and reigns in the Hearts of the Members of his Church. Neither doth it infer that Princes and Princeesses shall not be of it, and be nursing Fathers and Mothers to it. For no Man I presume will affirm, that a King loses any right in his Temporalities by turning Christian. *Isa. 49. 23. Luke 22. 29.*

If we are bound therefore to imitate our Saviour, and to govern our selves by his Precepts, let us search the Scriptures, and what we find in these to be our Duty, not fail to put it in Practice; and that we shall never do, till we discharge our Selves from the Conversation of bad Company; whether Men corrupt in their Lives, base, ffordid, or of uncharitable Principles. *Eph. 5, 11. 1 Pet. 4. 3. 4. Luke 12. 1.*

Our Blessed Saviour has absolutely enjoyn'd us to be at Peace among our selves, to live in Peace, and to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace, and as much as in us lies to live peaceably with all Men. Peace & Unity is so Divine a Quality, that God has declared himself to be the Author. God saith *St. Paul*, is not the Author of Confusion but of Peace, in all the Churches of the Saints. So much was our Saviour concerned for Peace and

and Unity, knowing well that all his Designs of good to his Church without them would prove abortive; which caused him before his Departure to be so earnest with his Father for the Peace and Unity of his Church. John 17. *Now I am no more in the World, but these are in the World, and I come to thee: Holy Father, keep through thine own Name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are one, That they also may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, they also may be one in us; that the World may believe that thou hast sent me.*

With the same Concern, no less we find the Apostles to instil these Divine Principles into the Hearts of their Hearers. Now I beseech you Brethren, by the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no Divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joyed together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment, 1 Cor. 1. 10. The Same Apostle, Rom. 16. 17. *Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them that cause Divisions among you, and avoid them, for they serve not our Lord Jesus Christ.* And we find the Bishops of the Church, succeeding the Apostles, though they had different Apprehensions in some things, yet this was their great Concern, to preserve the Unity of the Church. And at
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the same time of our Deliverance from the Egyptian darkness of Popery, it was the great Concern of the Bishops, as chief Instruments under God, as much as in them lay, to preserve Unity. They seperated 'tis true from the Church of Rome, but no further than she had from Christ and the Primitive Church: What was theirs she left them, and no further. Their course they had to Steer was difficult; they had two powerful Enemies which they were equally obliged to guard against, the Spirit of *Enthusiasm* on one side, and *Superstition* on the other: Their Work was certainly the Contrivance of a Superior Power. The Order and Comeliness of the Service, those Systems of Divine Rules compiled in the Homilies and Articles, are so conformable to the Word of God, that is, the Substance of them, that one would think nothing less than Ignorance or Malice could decry them. But allowing some things, Words and Phrases, are not so well guarded, or agreeable as might be, yet had we taken *St. Paul's* advice, we should not have made a Schism in in the Body for those things. *Let nothing be done through Strife or Vain Glory, but in Lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every Man on his own things, but on the things of others. Phil. 2. 3. 4.* Now the End of the Commandments is *Charity*, out of

of a pure Heart and a good Conscience, from which some have swerved, and have turned aside to vain jangling, 1 Tim. 5. 6. Give no Offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God, 1 Cor. 10. 32. Even as I please all Men in all things; not seeking my own Profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

These precepts are so plain, there needs no Comment upon them; and we may be well assured, that whoever practices upon Maxims contrary to these Precepts, may be Ministers of Men, but not of the Gospel. If our Saviour hath denounced a heavy Woe to them by whom Offences come, then sure all good Christians should be afraid to minister the least Occasion to such Offences, especially in so aggravating a sin as that of promoting or maintaining of Sects. Let every Man therefore that would desire at the Great Day to be received as a Member of Christ's Catholick Church, resolve with himself to act upon Catholick Principles. *Math. 18. 7. Rom. 16. 17, 18.*

But once more I say, How melancholy is the reflection, to look back to the Original of our Church Divisions? In the Reign of good Queen *Elizabeth*, when almost the whole Nation were of one Heart and of one Mind; so joyful were they, that they would near have parted with their own Eyes to
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the Authors of their deliverances, under God. But what followed? As soon as the Fences of the Church were broken down, what a horrid Innundation, and a spirit of *Enthusiasm* and infatuation pursued over the whole Nation. Their pretence was for liberty of Conscience, and Reformation; and liberty they took, and at last cast off their Allegiance, and Extirpated the Royal Family, and embroil'd their Hands in their Sovereigns Blood. Whether these persons were governed by the meek Spirit of Christ, as they pretended, or the Spirit of Antichrist, the World may judge. Miserable is the Case of Men, when the good Spirit of the Lord departs from them, as we find in the Case of *Saul*: Therefore we have all Reason to take Care that we grieve not the Holy Spirit. *Let him that standeth therefore, take heed lest he fall.* 1 Sam. 16. 14. Eph. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

But what amazed the whole World the most in these Men is, that what they did was all under a Pretence of Justice, Law and Scripture. And so father'd they all their Wickedness upon God himself, by deriving it from the Direction of his Sacred Spirit. And thus the Dove of Peace and Love was intitled to all their merciless and bloody Executions; and the Spirit of Meekness made the Patron of all their Rebellion, Lusts

and Abominations. *Psal* 94. 20, 21. *Joh.* 16. 2, 3, 4. *Jud.* 8.

Edwards, in his *Discovery*, pag. 74. speaking then of the whole Tribe of *Sectaries*, tells us, he was confident, that for these many hundred Years, there had not been a party that hath pretended to so much Holiness, Strictness, Power of Godliness, tenderness of Conscience, above all other Men, as those People, that have been guilty of so great Sins, horrible Wickedness, provoking Abominations. *2 Cor.* 11. 13, 14, 15.

Thus we see, when Devotion is become blind, and not ruled by Knowledge, Religion becomes every thing, and nothing; from one Extream to another. For how many are there, out of a Hatred to *Papists*, have run into contrary Extreams? How far Mens Souls are tainted in this Disease, and that of a Spiritual Infatuation: Or what defilement or Pollution of Mind and Conscience this Age is guilty of, in its present general Defection from the Gospel, is the great Concern of every Man to look into, especially his own Heart.

I must confess; was *Episcopacy*, a Form of Prayer, reading the Holy Scriptures, singing of Psalms, a novel Invention of Man; or kneeling at the Sacrament Idolatry; and that Unity, Peace and Charity, were no Precepts

Precepts of the Gospel, then they might have something to say: But to the contrary, nothing is more capable of easier and clearer Proof.

But instead of this, when we see them take up with poor Evasions, and make great Declamations of small things; such as the wearing of a Surplice, the Ceremony of the Cross after Baptism, Godfathers, and Godmothers, Sureties, Titles of Distinctions given to Men in Ecclesiastical Order, Organs, or the like; in all which things in themselves, who can see either good or Evil? And its well if those that think them otherwise are not equally or most guilty of what they pretend to be the most afraid of, that is Superstition; which to any impartial Man, is as a thousand Demonstrations of the weakness of their Cause.

They have, it is true, taken great pains; each Sect have not wanted Authors to Advocate for them, and some of no small Genius, who by studious and celebrated Apologies, with all Subtility of Wit and Reason, have endeavour'd to support what was begun without any.

Whoever hath read their Books of Controversies and Apologies, must acknowledge, that they very artfully managed every thing that is necessary to strengthen and beautify each

each their Hypothesis, except it be Truth and Miracles. *Mat. 24. 24.*

But as God is the Searcher of all Hearts, who discerns through all the Disguises and carnal Hypocrisie of Men, he will certainly render a severe Account to such who have been the chief Authors and most mischievous Promoters of our Divisions. We have it is true, a merciful God, who will, we doubt not, make great Allowances toward such who have done what they can to come to the truth, and miss of it; or those who live as it were under an unavoidable Necessity from coming at it; as those of the ignorant in the Church of *Rome*, and among our selves. Such who only believe Just what their Teachers and their Books tell them, without further Examination, or are incapable if they did, perhaps, to examine the true State of things to the Bottom, as they are now swell'd to such a bulk, will, we hope, (if they are Sincere) find a favourable Acceptance at the Great Day.

All which plainly appears under our present and miserable Circumstance, how difficult it is, to Assail such labour'd and inveterate Prejudice. Nothing sure less than an Almighty Power, whose Goodness is never wanting, if our Sins did not prevent him. But it is them, and them only, for which

we have now Reason to put up the Psalmist's Complaint, Psal. 60. *O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased: O turn thy self to us again. Thou hast made the Earth to tremble; thou hast broken it: Heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh. Thou hast shewed thy People hard things: Thou hast made us drink the Spirit of Giddiness,* Psal. 60 1, 2, 3.

The Spirit of Division and Infatuation is ordinarily the Harbinger and fore-runner of Judgment. And it is given sometimes to standers by to discern its near Approaches. We our selves have the Examples of God's former Judgments before us. We have the Experience of seeing the miserable and Melancholy consequence of our Divisions among us; which to particularize would take up a large Volume of it self; and yet we seem to be as stupid and unconcerned as ever. *Psal. 58. 4, 5. Jer. 8. 7.*

Don't we see many among us make their Boast of God and Religion, and at the same time Act in the Defiance of them? And is there not others who make a great pretence of the Spirit, and at the same time bring him in to deny his own Words in his Ordinances? Nay, Have they not gone further, in not only throwing up all Externals of Religion, Ordinances and Sacraments, but deny the Scripture to be the Rule of Faith? Which indeed

indeed is very Awful, and altogether contrary to the common Dictates of the Reason of a Christian; from the exprefs Declaration of the Spirit in the word it self. 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.

To instance that of St. Paul; *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed.* Now let any Man tell us how we shall be capable of Judging such Spirits, either from Heaven or of Men: Whether they Preach the Doctrine of Christ but from the Scripture it self, where that is revealed and Expressed. For if that is not the only Rule, it is no Rule: Then farewell to the Christian Religion: *For where there is no Law, there is no Transgression,* Gal. 1. 8, 9. Rom. 4. 15.

What are the human Laws of Princes, but a determinate Rule to the People? Saith not God the same? *To the Law & to the Testimony, If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no Light in them.* Isa. 8. 20. For however God may communicate himself inwardly by his Spirit in an Extraordinary way, to some particular Persons, without some visible and Miraculous Demonstrations, can be no Rule to others, since God hath given us a standing Revelation, nor to themselves, till they bring their Spirits to the Tryal with these Laws: Which plainly Demonstrates the latter, and not the former,

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can be an absolute Rule of Faith. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17.

We have many Predictions in Scripture, that false Prophets should arise and deceive many, but we have none that I know of foretelling that any should speak or write by immediate Inspiration of the Spirit, after the Holy Apostles should have left the World; having first committed to writing all such things as the Spirit of God had Dictated to them and commanded them to write. We have no Prophecy of Scripture (that I know of) foretelling, that in after Ages God would raise unto him other Prophets like unto them: So that all such Pretences being not founded on Scripture, must fall to the ground. *Rev.* 22. 19.

My friends, I believe you have no Design to disannul those Sacred Records wilfully or wittingly: I can truly say, I hope better things of you, many of which I have a very good Esteem for; and write not to provoke you, but to forewarn you of the danger of such Principles; as there appears so plain a Discovery that the Enemy is carrying on his design to Destroy both you and the Scripture. It was by this Method that he carried on his designs in the Ruin of the Eastern Churches, and setting up the *Alcoran* in the place of these *Holy Records of Divine Inspiration*. These are things too Sacred to be

be trifled withal. Have we not reason therefore to tremble and be afraid, lest the Christian Religion by such Maxims be lost, or chang'd to something like theirs? For are we not come to that pass, that many among us whose principles teach that we ly under no obligation of Obedience to our Governours in the Church? As to Religion, that Schism is no sin: That every man may securely follow his own fancy and opinion; and that there is no principles of Unity in the Christian Church. But I have said enough to confute those Principles before. Indeed were all the Dissenters in the right, and what is impossible, that what they all equally pretend as to Religion were true, and the National Church false, the Case would be different as to the first, but not in the latter. *1 Cor. 14. 33.*

But there is too sad an Indication that will discover the contrary: For as it is the Devil, who is the Author of Confusion, whose chief Concern it is to increase Divisions, and scatter the Members of Christ into Parties and Sects, which answers a further design he hath, which is, to destroy the Sacred Records; or at least to make the Essential Parts of them useles to the Souls of Men, by sharing out of them such obscure Parts, as he knows full well will insnare them into a Course of Contention,

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of blind Zeal and fury, to the utter subverting of that that is the most Essential of it. And this will hereafter more fully appear, in relation to each Sect and their Principles, that they are not all of a peice with their Zeal. *Mat. 23. 23. Rom. 2. 21, 22, 23.*

First, We are to consider, no zeal can be Laudable that is Partial, that is, not equally concerned: For both the Tables of the Law, and all the Precepts of the Gospel, whether relating to the External or Internal of Worship, he hath Ascribed to himself, or that of the second Table to our Neighbour. *Mat. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40. John 15. 14.*

Now it is true, there is an apparent Flaming Zeal discernable in each Sect for God and Religion; but the great misfortune is, their Practise fails in the General: For it is too obvious to be denied, their concern chiefly each of them is, what Mostly relates to support some darling and leading Tenet, which they perhaps themselves are the most deceived in. And this will appear very demonstrable, when we consider, how many plain and expresse Precepts of the Gospel equally staring them in the Face, together disregarded; as if they no way concerned them, or had ever been seen in those sacred Writings: In order to which I

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shall

shall here collect a short Breviate, which I pray God they may all seriously consider of,

1. That I hope it will be granted, that it belongs to God only to give Rules how he will be Worshipped, and who shall be appointed in the Work of the Ministry.

2. I hope it will be granted, That the Holy Scripture contains the Revelation of Gods will. From these two Reasons I hope it will be granted, also to be every Man's Concern to conform himself accordingly, as he will answer for it at the Great Day.

*Some principal Texts
practised upon by
the Church of En-
gland.*

MINISTRY.

*And no Man taketh
this Honour unto him-
self, but he that is cal-
led of God, as was Aa-
ron, Heb. 5. 4. 2 Chr.
26 18. Numb. 16. 40.
1 Sam. 13. 11, 12, 13,
14.*

*Some conclusive Infe-
rences, drawn from
the Principles and
Practice of others.*

CONTRARY.

Every Man taketh
this Honour upon him-
self; seeing all the
Congregation are ho-
ly, every one of
them, Numb. 16. 3.

So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, *Thou art my Son.* Heb. 5. 5. Mat. 28. 18, 19. Acts 6. 5, 6. and 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5. Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.

Let your Women keep Silence in the Church; for it is not permitted unto them to speak. I suffer not a Woman to teach. 1 Cor. 14. 34. 1 Tim. 2. 12.

BAPTISM.

Go ye therefore, teach all Nations, baptizing them, Mat. 28. 19.

Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we? Acts 10. 47. Acts 2. 41, 42.

Tho' Christ took not upon himself the Office of a Priest, before he had an external Call from Heaven, saying, *Thou art my Son*; yet we are perswaded, that all things are common now, to what they were then. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

Let your Women not keep Silence in the Church; for it is permitted unto them to speak. I suffer a Woman to teach.

Go ye therefore, teach all Nations, Baptize none.

Let every Man forbid Water, that none should be baptized, who have received the holy Ghost as well as we.

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ: And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise. For the Promise is to you, and to your Children. Gal. 3. 27, 29. Acts 2. 29. Luke 1. 55. 72.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Take, eat; this is my Body. Do this in Remembrance of me. Mat. 26. 26. Luke 22. 19. 1 Cor. 11. 23, 24.

READING THE SCRIPTURES IN PUBLICK.

For Moses of old time hath in every City them that preach him, being read in the Synagogues every Sabbath Day. Acts 15. 21,

We acknowledge that Infants were received into Covenant with Abraham; but we are taught to believe, that Covenant was not Evangelical, but of Works, thro' the Law. And when the Law became dissolved, the Covenant Priviledge of Infants became dissolved also. Gal. 3. 17, 18.

Take not, nor eat this is not his Body. Drink ye none of this. Do it not in Remembrance of him. Luke 6. 46.

How necessary forever it was formerly the Laws of God should be read Publick to the People, our Teachers

Luke

Luke 4. 16. Acts 13. 27. *He went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-Day, and stood up to read, Luk. 4. 16. Till I come, give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine, 1 Tim. 4. 13.*

And when this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it be also read in the Church. Col. 4. 16. 1 Thes. 5. 27. Josh. 8. 34, 35. Acts 13. 15. Rev. 1. 3.

BODILY WORSHIP.

O come, let us Worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker, Psal. 95. 6.

And they sang Praises with Gladness, and they bowed their Heads & worshipped. 2 Chr. 29, 30. Neh. 8. 6. 2 Chron. 7. 3. 2 Chr. 20, 18.

have thought it more prudent to lay it aside, and to leave it to the Discretion of the People to read them at home, if they can, or are willing.

And when this Epistle is read amongst you, cause that it may not be read in the Church. *Mar. 7. 7. Luke 6. 46.*

O come, let us worship, but not bow down, nor kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Our Worship is different ; being taught us for Doctrine the Commandments of our Guides. *Mark. 7. 7.*

And

And he was withdrawn from them a Stone's Cast, and kneeled down and prayed, Luke 22. 41. Eph. 3. 14. 1 Cor. 14. 25. Rev. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11.

And when he had thus spoke, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all, Acts 20. 36. and 9. 40.

And they all brought us on our way, with Wives and Children, till we were out of the City; and we kneeled down on the Shore and prayed, Acts 21. 5.

For ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorify God in your Bodies, and in your Spirits, which are God's, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Rom. 12. 1. Acts 16. 25.

This Worship sim-
bolizes with Popery:
They kneeled down
to their Images; and
with Heathens, for
they kneeled down to
Baal.

Our Teachers stand
up and pray for us
all; for we have no
Forms; and for all
to pray without Forms
would be Confusion.

We acknowledge
Kneeling to be a ve-
ry reverent and be-
coming Gesture for
poor Mortals; but
we are taught to con-
demn them all, as
Reliques of Idolatry
and Superstition.

If we worship God
in our Spirits, we
think it is sufficient,
without any such
reverent Posture of
Body; besides, it is
more easy, and less
troublesome.

FORM

FORM OF PRAYERS.

When ye pray, say,
*Our Father which art
in Heaven,* Luke 11.
2. Mat. 18. 19, 20.

Take with you words,
and turn to the Lord
your God, and say un-
to him, Hos. 14. 2. On
this wise ye shall bless,
saying, Num. 23. Let
Israel now say, That
his Mercy endureth
for ever, Psal. 118. 2.
Deut. 26. 3, 13, 15.
Joel 2. 17. Judg. 21. 2.
Isai. 6. 3.

And he left them
and went away the
third time, saying the
same Words, Mat. 26.
44. And Jesus cryed
with a loud Voice, in the
Words of David, say-
ing, My God, my God,
why hast thou forsaken
me? Psal. 2. 1. Mat.
27. 46. Acts 16. 25.
Acts 4. 24, 25. Rev.
19. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

When ye pray, say
not, *Our Father which
art in Heaven,* but
something else. Such
Precedents, were we
to allow them, would
overthrow all our
Hypothesis.

Take with you no
Form of Words, say-
ing, Let Israel not
say, as in Psal. 118.
and 136. That his
Mercy endureth for
ever: For like this
we are taught to ri-
dicule the Church
Litany, as Tautolo-
gy and vain Babbling.

No Examples can
prevail with us; for
we have a perfect An-
tipathy against hear-
ing the same Words
twice: tho' never so
found and good. It is
the Invention of new
Words, more than the
Sense of them, we De-
light in, and are per-
swaded God doth so
too. Eccl. 5. 1, 2, 3.

SINGING OF
PSALMS.

*Speak to your selves
in Psalms, and Hymns,
and Spiritual Songs;
singing, and making
Melody in your Hearts
to the Lord, Eph. 5.*

19. Col. 3. 16. Mat.
26. 30. 2 Chr. 29. 30.

*And at Midnight
Paul and Silas prayed,
and sang Praises un-
to God; and the Pri-
soners heard them,
Acts 16. 25. Saying,
I will declare thy name
unto my Brethren;
In the midst of the
Church will I sing
Praises unto thee,
Heb. 2. 12. Rom. 15.
9, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 14.
15. Mat. 26. 30. Rev.
5. 9. and 2. 3. and 15.
3.*

Speak not to your
selves in Psalms, nor
Hymns, nor Spiritual
Songs; neither sing,
nor make Melody in
your Hearts to the
Lord.

All the express
Commands and Ex-
amples you have
brought, and ten
thousand more, have
no Weight with us.
Our Teachers are
good Men, and we
trust they will not
deceive us nor them-
selves. They are
therefore our Eyes,
and our Tongues. If
we give God our
Presence in Worship,
we think that is
enough; and what is
more, we are taught
is Popery.

*Thus, after the Way which they call Heresie,
so worship we the God of our Fathers, as we
are manifestly taught both by Precepts and Ex-
amples,*

amples, of Patriarchs and Prophets, Men, Women and Children, Cherubims and Angels, our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, and believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets, Acts. 24. 14.

Ye are my Friends, saith Christ, if ye do whatsoever I command you, Joh. 15. 14. For why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say, Luk. 6. 46. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my Words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the Last Day, Joh. 12. 48.

Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine that ye have learned, and avoid them, Rom. 16. 17. For while one saith, I am of Paul, another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? 1 Cor. 3. 4. But evil Men and Seducers shall wax worse and worse; deceiving, and being deceived, 2 Tim. 3. 13. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lust shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears; and they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables, 2 Tim. 4. 3, 4. These are such Texts, I think, as may justly startle many of this Age into a serious Consideration of; and the dreadful Account one Day the Authors in promoting the Calamities of our Nation hath
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suffer'd

suffer'd by Divisions, will have to answer
for. *Math. 18. 7. Luke 17. 1.*

S E C T. VI.

1 Cor. 1. 10.

1 Cor. 12. 25.

Rom. 16. 17.

I Have in the former Part of this Treatise showed you what the Spiritual internal Worship is: I have also just before showed you by what Rules of external Worship God himself hath required of us to offer to him in Publick, as we are expressly informed in his own Words, which cannot deceive us; of which in part I have cited at large, and need only refer you to your Bible: You need go no farther to be satisfied whether these things be true, I have affirm'd in this Treatise, if you would deal impartially with yourselves, and take the trouble to examine. But here lies the Obstacle; Prejudice, the fatal Cheat, a slight examination, or condemning a Book without reading. As to the inferences I have before drawn from your Principles, except from what I have gathered from your Books, I must acknowledge I am too much a Stranger to all the receivable Arts and Maxims improved, as to know every

every particular, what moving Causes Sway your Conscience, so contrary to the express Declaration, clearly revealed by God in the Scripture of truth: Whether Education, Interest, Love of a Party, the supposed Goodness, Gifts, or Sanctity of some of your Leaders, or thro' prejudice entertained against the Church of *England* unjustly, from artful aspersions of your Books cast upon her, or from the wicked Lives of some of her Ministers or Professors; whether one or all, I know not.

But this I know, and it is what you ought well to consider of, whether in turning your Backs, and forsaking the Church of *England*, you have not turned your Backs upon the Scripture, or at least several Branches of it, especially in Relation to the external Acts of the Worship of God, and of his own prescribing; which certainly ought to be the only Rule to his Creatures, to worship him in his own way; for Obedience is better than Sacrifice. This, I say, is the grand material Point, that ought to be consider'd: For it is not what the Church of *Rome* hath held that is true, tho' abused, or any People under Heaven symbolizing with that, that is true in it self, can alter the Nature of it: For what hath God for its Author, is not to be the less esteemed for

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being

being found in the *Romish* Mass-Book, or Articles of Faith, or in any other Books or Articles in the World. And yet what Numbers of People have been imposed upon this Way, by the artful Management of crafty Deceivers?

Can any Body think, that the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Ten Commandments*, and what is call'd the *Apostle's Creed*, can be the less esteemed for being found in their Service? Neither can indifferent things, as the wearing a Surplice, or a Gown. For Instance, Suppose the Church of Rome now should appoint their Clergy, in the Room of the former, for Distinction sake, to wear the Habit of a *Quaker*, or a *Presbyterian Minister*, Must they immediately change their Dress on that Account? And if they did, Pray tell me which would be most superstitious?

These are such unreasonable Maxims, that nothing less than an infatuated People could be led into the Belief of: For by these Maxims, there is no Truth but what may be rendered frightful and precarious; the Examples of the best Men in the World rendered odious, even those of *Solomon*, *Hezekiah*, *Ezra*, *Jeremiah*, *Daniel*, *John the Baptist*, not excepting our Dear Saviour and his Apostles; who from their Practice of Praying, and teaching Forms of Prayer

Prayer; of Singing, Reading, and Praising God in Publick; Bowing, Kneeling, and other Postures of Bodily Worship, to be the Actors and Patrons of Superstition and Idolatry, as by Consequence is blasphemously inferred, in that wicked and scandalous Libel of *Delaune's*. I say, if those holy and inspired Penmen are thus to be misrepresented, we need not wonder the Church of *England* should come under the same Representation. *Blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of Evil against you falsely for my sake, Matth. 5. 11, 12. It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call him of his Household? Fear them not therefore; for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known, Matth. 10. 25, 26.*

No less in the same manner have the Primitive Fathers, and what they practised, been from these base Arts misrepresented, by the spurious Collections that too visibly abound in the World, and among our selves; and none more wicked and false, we have Reason to mistrust, than those of ** Delaune*, and one *† Danvers*, one of his Brethren,

* *Dr. Brit's* *Ler. to Hart.* Wal. 2 Vol. of *Bapt.*

whom

whom he so much resembles. The first of these Dr. *Britt* hath sufficiently detected, as also was the latter by Mr. *Walker* and Mr. *Baxter*, who traced all his Quotations so effectually, as that he was publicly accused for a base and wilful Forger. For Mr. *Baxter* and Mr. *Walker* went so far, as to put it in an Appeal to his own Party against him, that they ought utterly to renounce such a Man, whose Quotations they had found false and forged, except two; and them my Author saith, Mr. *Baxter* found after to be the same.

I should not have singled out these two Authors, but find them so much carested and made use of among us, to the deceiving, it is to be feared, many poor ignorant People. It would be endless to trace those artful Maxims made use of one against another. Neither have the Prelates of our Church been less misrepresented, and brought in as Principal Espousers of every Party, as we find quoted in the aforesaid Pamphlets, Dr. *Barlow*, Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Dr. *Taylor*, and others. The first of these two I understand was for some Words dropt from them in their Youth, in favour of the Antipædobaptists; which some Years afterwards, they seeing them-

selves

selves quoted, particularly **Dr. Barlow*, makes this Apology, That what he then said, he spoke with too much Confidence, and much less Judgment. As for *Dr. Taylor*, what his Politicks were in writing his Book of *Liberty of Propbesying*, wherein he hath so much betrayed the Truth of what he himself professed, and so artfully advanced the contrary, is easily to be accounted for, were it not for too much swelling this Treatise; tho' he himself is not to be justified, it being written in *Oliver's* Time, when the Independents had the Government, and were for persecuting all that differed from them; so he in this Book makes himself an Advocate for the Antipædobaptists and Roman Catholicks: Which indeed can be no Service to your Cause in quoting of him, except in speaking more for you in jest, than any I have ever yet seen of you, speak for your selves in earnest. But as for himself, that he had never the least Thought of Scruple, is evident from all his Writings, especially his *Great Exemplar*, and *Ductor Dubitantium*. This Digression in these Particulars, I can truly say, is not out of Prejudice to any of your Persons, but out of a sincere Concern, that I verily believe you are horribly imposed upon, and so impose upon others.

* *Wal. 2 Vol. Bapt. Tayl. Lib. Prop.*

I say you might certainly have so much Mod-
 esty (as he would or think) in judging, that
 however I or others may be mistaken in
 the Circumstances of this Ordinance,
 that you your selves are yet so full of self
 love and Cleavours, and so full of rashly to im-
 gine without any more visible Demonstration
 on your Hives and Morals from ioneths,
 so muchly to think that all the Christian
 World, and especially the reformed Part of
 it, should have no Light Knowledge, nor
 understanding nor Conscience, but you selves
 Which to the contrary there appears so
 great a Manifestation (except Ignorance and
 Obstinacy) in every thing else that is new
 or different that have yet appeared to the World
 in Print, from what ever came from any
 of your Party; except a few Systems of dry
 and barren Disputations. Let these be your
 Judges. 2. How can it be that is not that is the most
 Formidous Not for being Tolerated from
 your Earthly Superiours that will allow you
 any thing, nor for your being pleased with
 your own Inventions, if it be not what God
 commands. Nay, it is what hath ever been
 and ever will be the Humour of the World
 in all probability, to be more fond and Ze-
 alous of their own Inventions, than of what
 God himself commands. So that this I say
 you ought to consider what pleased God, and
 not what pleases your selves.

And thus it is by the Management (as I have before observed) of a set of uncharitable Biggots, who are Enemies to the Spirit of Peace and Unity, are the Instruments among all Sects that keep the Churches Wounds from healing; either by exalting or undervaluing things beyond their Bounds; advancing Circumstances in Religion into Fundamentals, and calling things by Names that have no other Being but in their own Fancies: And how much Religion suffers by those Means, not only among weak Men and Women, but some others, who either cannot or will not distinguish betwixt Humane Passions and Divine Revelation, is what is greatly to be Lamented in this Age.

Prov. 14. 15.

Cast our eyes which way we will, Doth not things look very sad and awful among us? Is not that that is the most Sacred, and ought to be treated in the most solemn and suivable manner, and gravity of Persons and Place, become the common Topick of frothy Debates in publick Streets, Shops and Taverns? These are such distinguishing Characters of the Fruits of our Divisions, that every Leader and Promoter may behold the terrible Fruits of their Labours: What therefore can we expect for all these things, after so long abused Patience of God, but that he will by some remarkable Judgment,

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hath been Offences not often given by particular Persons of our Church by their indiscreet and too Arbitrary Proceedings as well as Objections from their Personal Resentments; indeed most of our Divisions have taken their first Rise, and not so much from any Dissatisfaction of any thing in the Church. This is the Truth, that could easily be made appear, which could be no just Cause of Separation. A more wicked set of Men could never be, nor of a more persecuting Spirit, than some of the Jewish Church, yet our Blessed Saviour suffered their Indignities without giving the least Countenance of Satisfaction, so like wife in the Christian Church there was carnal Professors, and false Apostles, proud *Dilectissimi*, yet the Apostles give not the least Encouragement. This way it was from this Error, that great Schism of the *Donatists* took its Rise, who under a Mask of more Sanctity, separated from the Orthodox on pretence of their being Carnal & unchristian; till time they presently discovered what Spirit they were of; for they became divested of all Charity and Humanity, and became barbarous, and inhumanly murdered many Thousands of the Orthodox Christians, and I will for the same Error that misled them, is now what now misleads many in this Age. It is sufficient I think that we are told, that

the Tares and Wheat shall grow together till the Harvest. *Math. 13. 29, 30.* Notwithstanding, this is an Eternal Truth, that all good Men will signify, That there is no Apology to be made for wicked, carnal, and profane Professors: For to what purpose is it for to call themselves of the Church of England, and her Children, when their Lives are contrary to their profession? For such may call the Church their Mother, as the wicked Jews did *Abraham* their Father; But what saith our Saviour? *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Works of your Father ye will do.* Let Men be never so punctual and Critical in their Conformity to all the Points and Ways in the Church of England; let them constantly attend Gods Publick Worship, and behave themselves most reverently and decently at the Publick Prayers: Yet if such Men be profane in their Conversation, Intemperate, Desirers of true Piety and Godliness: If they live loosely and at random, disregarding of Private and Family Devotion, not honest and just in their Dealings; if they be Drunkards, riotous, or Blasphemers of Gods Holy Name, nor a Companion of such, nor all their regular Devotion, all their Praying, Praising, Reading, Singing, Bowing, Kneeling to the Honour of God, and our Blessed Saviour; all their Zeal for the Church

and

and Religion, will avail them nothing, They are no better than Pharisees and deceitful Hypocrites, whose Prayers will be had in Abomination before the Lord. *Mat. 23. 16, 17. Isa. 29. 13. Rom. 10. 10.* Let us therefore beware; there will be a sharp reckoning for all that use not Holy Things in a Religious and Holy Manner. How often in this life is the Secret Providence of God displayed in a wonderful manner, in the Punishment of such unhappy Creatures? Instances we have, and not a few in the Sacred Volumes; as being given up to a hard heart, a reprobate mind, a despairing Conscience, an untimely Death, the loss of Children, Estates, Honour or Credit. *Rom. 2. 8, 9.*

Certainly, never any place in the world depended more on an immediate Hand of Divine Aid for its Preservation, Protection & Prosperity, than this on many accounts; and which only can be expected by the Favour of God; yet, to Judge by the Practice of many among us, the only way to prosper and gain the Almighty's Favour, is to affront him, and that to lay a Foundation for a prosperous Voyage, is, to act some notable Prank of Lewdness and Debauchery, either abroad or at home; which are things both awful and intolerable. *Drum. 28. 58, 59. Prov. 28.*

But

But admiring such Men should prosper and
 escape the strokes of Gods vengeance in
 this life, yet they may be overwhelmed
 they cannot in the next life. For God himself
 (that cannot lye) hath expressly declared
 that though Men dig in the earth and be
 hid, yet shall they not escape his punishment; so that it is
 greatly no doubt, will be the portion of
 wicked Professors. As Regulus, a Jew or
 a Turk, is no so great an Enemy to Christi-
 anity, as a Corrupt and Lewd Christian
 for he they equally Enemies to the Church.
 Sundry of all Men, ought never to open
 their Mouths against Schismatics or He-
 riticks; for they themselves are the worst.
 For no Heritick is so bad as one of a wicked
 life. Luke 11. 29. 30. I desire guard him, and
 for how commendable soever it may be
 for Christian Princes to endeavour to pro-
 mote Religion, and the Interest of the Church
 which is no more than what every Christ-
 ian in Conscience are bound to do, yet this
 is not to be imagined by Carnal Weapons,
 human strength, or Policy: No, it is by
 the favour of God, which is only to be
 purchased by Truth & Innocency, Peace, Love
 and Unity of her Members. For when
 these languish and decay, when is the
 Church in Danger, more to be feared
 much from her Enemies without, as the
 Sins of her Professors within, that incenses
 the

the wrath of God against her for her In-
 gratitude and for perverting the Scriptures
 and Heresies to increase and prevail. To im-
 prove it then as Discipline of his Providence
 to Chastise her, When other ways, the wise
 Counsel and Admonition of God in his
 Word becomes ineffectual. *Deut. Ch. 28.*
Rom. Ch. 2. These are such Characters as
 we may trace through all the Sacred Vo-
 lumes, of God's Just Proceeding, lest he
 move in this way of Chastizing his Church
 and People: he behoves therefore all of us
 seriously to examine ourselves, how far
 each of us have in any Degree been access-
 ary to our present Calamities, and solemnly
 Repent for what is past, and forsake our
 Sins, and bring forth Fruits meet for Repen-
 tance. This, and this only, is the happy
 Course that can bring us to a deep Sense of
 the melancholy, confused, and distressed State
 of the World and our own Misery. And such
 a compassionate Concern for others, will
 force us upon an Earnest application to God
 for the whole State of Mankind, that our
 Divisions might cease, and that he would
 graciously appoint happy Instruments in all
 Nations to advance his Truth and a Glori-
 ous Reformation, that the Kingdoms of
 this World may become the Kingdom of
 his dear Son Jesus Christ. And much from her
 Professors within that incen-

[illegible]

Truth; for this wisdom, saith St. James, descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, Devilish; Jam. 3. 14, 15. So long as they are separate, in a formal State of Hostility against the true National Church, and to the subverting of all the Bounds of Unity, Peace, Love and Charity: For these are the very Soul and Substance of Religion, and the very Bounds of all Perfection; For these are those immortal Graces that live at God's Right Hand, and are part of the Employment of the Happiness in the other World; and what the Precepts of the Gospel hath enjoined us to in this, as the Terms of our Acceptance with God in the other: For the End of the Commandments, saith St. Paul, is Charity, out of a pure Heart, from which some having swerved, have turned aside to vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. 1 Tim. 1. 5, 6, 7.

Whoever therefore will sacrifice those Essential Qualities for the other, and the sake of a party, will make a sorrowful Change, and will be sure to lose in the end considerable more than he gains.

OF all the Distinguishing Marks of a true Church of Christ, there is none greater than those of Moderation and Charity; of which the Church of England hath as just

a Claim as any Church this day joins the Christian World: The truth of which is tacitly confessed by every Dissenting Sect, who have more than once declar'd, they had rather, except themselves, they should be a National Church, than any other Sect. And the Reason is plain, they are too well knowing to each others Principles, and what they have formerly acted, than for the future to trust one another: For nothing can be more certain or reasonable to conclude upon, than this Maxim, *What hath been, may be again*; and that Men of the same Principles and Kidney, when in their power, will Act by the same Engines, which cannot fail to work the like effect: For blind Zeal, & uncharitable Bigottry, is at all Times the same, and in all false principles according to the Measure, Degree, and Malignity of them. Herein, the most wise and charitable tell us, consists in a perverse and obstinate act of the Will, against the Light of their own Conscience, wherein every Man says his own Judge, Which is a Point our Dissenters ought to consider, who have lost no Stone unturn'd both by Tongues and Pen, in a general Combination, as far as in their Power lies, to extirpate that Church out of the World; and from their own Confession their only Bulwark, under God, is placed them in their Liberties, and from Heterodoxy

one another; or being made a Prey to a Foreign Enemy.

Ungrateful people! Is this doing as you would be done by? Is this the fruits of what you pretend to be, the Holy, the Righteous, the Harmless, the meek Disciples of Jesus? *Math. 7. 29.*

Was indeed your separation from the Church of England, a Means of promoting a more happy and effectual Reformation, in producing those Essential Fruits of Holiness, Righteousness, Justice, Mercy, Gentleness, Goodness, Meekness, Long suffering, Peace, Love & Charity in the World, and more for the Glory of God, then indeed the Case would be different: But on the contrary, by sad experience, while we see them produce Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Envy, Murder, and Heresies, and the like, it can never be suppos'd to proceed from God. *James 3. 14, 15, 16.*

One unhappy and popular Error this Day amongst us, is the greatest obstruction to a Reconciliation; that is, from those false Conclusions, drawn by each Sect, of the Favour of God, and the Goodness of their Cause, on the Account of some superior Extempore Qualities in their Teachers: But this is inconsistent for any one to draw such Conclusions to themselves that equally are common to other Sects, who widely differ,

and yet have men among them endued with the like superior Gifts; which they themselves will not allow in their own Teachers to be of any value, when they once leave them, and are improved in another perswasion: And in this it is demonstrable to make a thing proper to one, which is common to all, is a true Note of Folly: Though in some such Cases, it may proceed from ignorance; yet too many, who are to be feared, are Fools by Craft, in perswading others to believe what they do not themselves.

Though it be absolutely necessary, and of the highest Concern for all Mankind, to seek earnestly to God for the gifts and Graces of his Holy Spirit, as also to improve them, it is every persons Duty, to the glory of God and the good of each other; yet I never could learn nor can understand, that God hath any where granted a License to any private Man, to Exercise his Gifts in a public Capacity of Preaching before the Legally and Lawfully set apart for that End. As for the Prophets and Apostles, their having an immediate Call is wide from the Case: Or in Extraordinary Cases, as the Disciples of Christ, and Companions of the Apostles, as were, by Persecutions scattered abroad, who were endued with extraordinary Gifts, and had the Power of working Miracles,

rules, which make sufficient to affect their
 Authority; which is not what. How any of
 those that dispute presume will pretend
 to have *Heb. 4. 11. Rev. 2. 2.* as a rule to go on
 Besides, it is inconsistent with all these
 very Rules the Gospel prescribes to us, in
 relation to all the Terms of Unity, Order,
 and Obedience to the Church of Christ, and
 those set over us. Nay, it is inconsistent with
 all the Laws, Orders and Governments in
 the world, humane or Divine. For other-
 ways, if all things are common to every Man,
 if this be the Case, then every man hath an
 equal Right; then I presume it will be grant-
 ed very Lawful for me or any other to In-
 stitute a Church in our own Family; and
 I see not but that with equal Reason, Ad-
 minister the Sacraments. Which is a ready
 way at once to put an End to all use of
 Public Churches or Meetings. Nor can I
 see any reason, why he that can so boldly
 venture to transgress upon the first Line of
 Christ's Commission, (*Math. 28. 19, 20.*) need
 to be afraid of what follows.
 But these things are too Sacred, I am a-
 shamed they will find, however they make a
 Title of them, and this they might see,
 would they but calmly cast their Eyes back
 to the *Heb. 4. 11. Rev. 2. 2.* and in their times
 whenes Chiefly this modern Invention took
 its Rise, or especially when it became Estab-
 lished

blinded in this Notion by a Law, so that they might easily discern how well God approved of it; by those Horrible Impieties, he suffered them to fall into; as is very plain was committed by those very Men, who were so highly Exalted for their Gifts, and their boundless Liberty of improving themselves; but there might be some Eminent good Men, both Teachers and professors, I question not, of better Morals of the Dissenters, who would know and Protest against some of their most horrid Impieties: Neither do I think any man now living is to be Charged with the Crimes then committed, though even by his nearest Relations; that is, provided he abhors the Actions, and detests the Principles leading to them, as this certainly was one, of denying Episcopacy: Nor but that it must be acknowledged, God never had a Church, nor were there ever any religious Societys in the World; but that there were some *Ishmaelites*, possessed with that Diabolical Spirit of Persecution, or killing Men for God's sake.

But the dangerous Consequence lies here, and what hath ever proved Fatal in all Nations, and in all ages; that is, when this Diabolical Spirit is hatched, nourished, and bred up from the very Principles and Maxims of its Religion; so that it becomes the Spirit of the whole Party.

This was the
Case

CASE of the Jews at the coming of our Blessed Saviour. This was the case of *Arians* and his Followers, *Donatus* and his Sect; and is of the Church of *Rome* at this day. This was the case of that Protestant Sect in *Germany* that Butchered so many Thousand innocent Persons. This was the same Spirit of two famous Sects that *OLIVER* found fit for his purpose, to add that unheard of Villany in *Forty Eight*. And have we not the same Cause to mistrust the same malicious, uncharitable Spirit hath Possessed too many in *NEW-ENGLAND*; and especially one Sect among our selves in this Place, whose uncharitable Actions, Carriage and Deportment, sufficiently betrays them to be a People; it is to be feared that know not themselves what Spirit they are of, nor how far, had they the Power in their Hands, it would Lead them. I can truly say, I heartily wish for their sakes in this Point I were mistaken, but there is too many Symptoms and notorious Discoveries in them to be denied: Not but particular persons among them may be excepted, who as in other Societies, are better than what their Principles teach. But this hath ever been observed, that men of bad Principles are the most impatient and outrageous under the least Restraint in any Government; and on the contrary; when in Power,

Power, the most extream in Restraining others. Those wicked Spirits we read of in the Gospel, that took Pleasure in tormenting others, yet were extremely impatient under our Saviour's Subjection, *Math. 8. 28.* So impartial is this Spirit, that in every instance might be Traced what is deceivable, and particularly this one, What can be more base or unjust, than to deny others the Liberty of defending their principles, that they themselves take? And how notorious, unjust, as well as ungrateful must it be, in those who deny that Liberty to the Members of that Church from whom they receive their own? Though not perhaps in plain Words, yet in every thing else that is base and malicious, they make too plain a Discovery, especially in their common way of treating the Authors, tho' never so inoffensive but in that of differing from them. Now what can such baseness proceed from, but the Spirit of Error? For if their principles were good, what need they be concerned they should be brought to the Light? And if they otherways mistrust it, it is the height of Presumption, next to the unpardonable Sin, to perswade the World to believe, what they themselves do not.

It is indisputable, we have no warrant to Judge Men's Thoughts; but it is as undeniably true as necessary, to Judge Men's Words,

Actions,

Actions, Behaviour, and Principles; and never more beset than in these perilous times, when Religion seems to have lost its Complexion, and to have chang'd its Name from one thing to another; while Covetousness, Avarice, Mildness, and Sweetness of Temper, and Conversation is counted for Marks of a Reprobate. Now the contrary, while a Sulphur, Starch, Demure, Preciseness of Temper, for that sort is said, which indeed hath all the most certain Symptoms of a Hypocrite. Now should it be in those who are as well as is an amazing thing to think, that a Soul possessed with the Qualities of a soul, was pious, Virefull, reserved, contentious, and uncharitable Spirit, shall be thought commendable and praise-worthy, by any Society of People professing Christianity; and of which, a Lively Emblem of this Spirit, very applicable, the Poet describes to be of a pale and lean Complexion, looking askint, leavened with Bitterness and Gall; never rejoicing but in the Calamity of its Adversaries; always unquiet, and continually tormenting its self and others.

It is certain, there cannot be a more Evil Token of a deluded Sect, than such whose Principles lead to Cancel the Bonds of Nature, or weaken the Powers of Natural Religion. This was what our Blessed Saviour rebuked the Jews for, and for which he

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pronounced so many Woes against them, *Matth. 23.* Little Cause have either Papists or Protestant of such principles to boast, in making Converts to Christianity, while they are like to lose more than they Gain, *Rom. 2. 26, 27.* which will be making them two-fold worse the Children of Hell, as our Blessed Saviour told the Jews (in the like Case) than they were before. For what can avail to us all our Gifts, and the Knowledge of Christ, while we are separate from Charity, and the Practise of Morality? Or to what purpose is the Preaching of Christ Crucified, while at the same time we are as it were Crucifying of him afresh, in not Crucifying our Lusts and mischievous Errors as aforesaid. The two Tables of the Law are inseparable, the keeping of one can never atone for the breaking of the other. For a man to say *he loveth God, that hateth his Brother*, says *St. John, is a liar*, *1 John. 4. 20.* For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word, even in this, saith *St. Paul*, *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*, *Gal. 5. 14.*

Notwithstanding the Errors and mistakes of Christians, yet if they are not wilful, and accompanied with a sincere Love to God and our Neighbours, that if he that in these things serve Christ, is acceptable to God, we have thus reason to hope, though wide and different Men's thoughts and apprehensions

may be in things not otherwise Essential, which are but few; retaining, I say, an humble Frame of Spirit, accompanied with an undissembled love to God and the truth, to the best of their Power endeavour to come to the Knowledge of it; preserving their Souls from all the Pollutions of the flesh, living in the Practice of all Moral Virtues, being in Charity with all Men, trusting in the Meritorious Blood of Christ, shall, I doubt not, from a merciful God, meet with a gracious Acceptance. *Eph. 2. 8. Ad. 10. 34. 35. 2 Cor. 8. 12. Eph. 5. 22, 23. Rom. 14. 18.*

On the contrary, as just reason we have to expect of wicked Men; such as the unjust, unmerciful, uncharitable, common disturbers of Peace, and Promoters of Causeless Divisions in Religion, factious and rebellious Disturbers of Governments, contentious Promoters of strife and Debates in Families, and among Neighbours; though differing in Sects and Parties in the World, are acted by one and the same malicious Spirit, and will no doubt at last be consigned into one Society. *Pf. 50. 8, to 23. Math. 8. 11, 12. Math. 23. 41. to 46. Luke 17. 34, 35, 36. Rom. 2. 6. to 16. 1 John 4. 16, 17. Jude 14. 15.*

Nor can it be otherwise expected; for what should such malicious, spiteful, inragged, uncharitable, contentious Spirits do in Heaven among the former Society, so different

ferent? For such a State and Society, if possible, would rather be a Torment to them than a happiness. No, no, all such spiteful and malicious Tools of parties, their secret Meeting Combinations, wicked Plots, uncharitable, censorious Aspersions, slanderous Calumnies and Defamations; under all the different Masks and Disguises of Hypocrisy, though secretly hid from all the World but themselves, God, who is privy to all our most secret thoughts and Actions, will one Day bring to Light all those hidden things of Darkness, and will make manifest the Counsel of the Heart. 1 Cor. 4. 5.

And in this the Scripture very plainly Points out to us but two different States after Death, so in like manner the two Covenants make no more Distinctions than of two sorts of Men in the World, the Carnal and the Spiritual: *To be Carnally minded is Death, but to be Spiritually minded is Life and peace,* Rom. 8. 6. Now what these Works of the Flesh are, and of the Spirit, they are manifest, as I have observed; no man can plead ignorance. 1 Cor. 3. Col. 5. Eph. 5. It is not a bare Profession, nor a flaming Zeal for God, that will avail us. The Kingdom of Heaven is not to be taken by Violence of Men, carnal Passions of Pride, Vain Glory in carrying on the Interest of a Party, while at the same Time their Souls are nothing but

but a Sink and Habitation of unclean Spirits; of Envy, Hatred, Malice, and all Uncharitableness, and what is evil.

In vain therefore is all Pretence of Conscience, and Pleas for Nonconformity, while they are separated from the thing it self they pretend to, more pure Religion, that is, Love and Charity, the real Substance of Religion. This can be nothing less than downright Hypocrisy: For the very distinguishing Mark and Eminency of the Christian Religion, beyond that of the Jews, or any other Religion in the World, is not only to love our Neighbour, our Brother, and such as love us, but our Enemies, and them that hate us. Whoever therefore teaches, or by any means encourages Principles contrary to this Doctrine, is a notorious Deceiver; nay, tho' an Angel from Heaven, he is not to be believed. Indeed, by the general Practice of Christians, one might believe the contrary; and so we may by this Rule see their Opinion of all other Precepts of the Gospel, which are openly violated every Day: Nay, is there not many among us, tho' they do not speak out in plain Words, yet by their Actions show how little the Moral Law is regarded, any further than among themselves and the Brotherhood, as the common Phrase is; that is,

to love God and themselves, as did the malicious Jews, and hate all the World besides. A thing most bitterly detested by our Blessed Saviour. *Mat. 5. 20. and 43. and 48.*

It is therefore of the greatest Importance to examine and confute such pernicious Errors, and to show that there is nothing in the New Testament to favour them. For the very Terms of Acceptance with God, is doing as we would be done by, forgiving, if we ever expect to be forgiven, loving our Neighbours as our selves, to be of one Mind, to live in Unity, and follow after Peace, to have fervent Charity among our selves: For *he that loveth not, saith St. John, knoweth not God; for God is Love.* 1 Joh. 4. 8. *Matth. 7. 12. Mark 11. 25, 26. Gal. 5. 14. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Eph. 4. 3. Heb. 12. 14, 15. 1 Pet. 4. 8.*

I say again, let a Man read the New Testament with a disposed Mind, he will find this to be the Doctrine of Christ, and particularly in that excellent Sermon on the Mount, and as earnestly enforced by the Apostles, as plain as Words can express, That without Holiness, and the Practice of all Moral Precepts, nothing less we can expect, but an utter Exclusion from the Presence of God.

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Let no Man flatter himself in the Opinion of being in the Favour of God, on the Account of any External Privilege: No particular Systems, Articles or Opinions, can entitle him to an Eternal Reward, through the Death and Sufferings of Christ, without a constant and universal Obedience to both Tables of the Law. Nor can the most extensive Zeal for God, of any Man or Sect in the most orthodox Way upon Earth, tho' accompanied with the most utter Abhorrence of all the Debaucheries, wicked Practices, Errors and Impieties of Men: If all this be not tempered with Meekness, Moderation, Pity and Compassion, in Methods conformable to the Gospel, it neither can nor will be accepted with God; for what favours of Pride, Anger or Rage, Malice or Hatred, or Uncharitableness, are not from above. We may be well assured, such carnal, sensual, unmortified Passions, must proceed from the Dictates and Delusion of the Spirit of Error. *He that hath not the spirit of Christ, is none of his.* Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, saith our Saviour, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. We are told as plain as Words can express, that all religious Performances without Charity, is nothing, and without following Peace with all Men, and holiness, no man shall see the Lord.

Lord. *Math.* 7. 21. *Rom.* 8. 9. *Heb.* 12. 14.

For any Man to hope therefore with any sort of Assurance, or Pretension, from any other Motive of Party Distinctions of Truth or Holiness, than in the Practice of Morality, is a Hope without any Foundation, and vain, groundless Presumption; such Presumption as seems to cast the greatest Reflection upon the Glorious Attributes of God, especially that of his Holiness: Which is just as gross a Delusion, as Men's fixing Salvation upon the Externals of Religion, without an Internal Resignation of the Soul, which I have I think sufficiently Confuted in the former Part of my Design in these Papers. For what is all our Pretension to Religion, if they are not solid and uniform? What is Prayers to God if they are not sincere? What can we suppose that hearing Gods word could be intended for, unless for the Practise of what we hear, unless we can be so absurd as to imagine we can deceive God, or put a Cheat upon the Almighty?

But I have said enough I fear, and more than enough, that will be resented by some sorts of Persons, and zealous Contenders, who will probably be ready to object, they are not apprised of so great a Decay of

true Piety, or any such Fatal Consequence attending our Divisions; or that the Terms of Acceptance with God can be so very strict, and so near as they are here by me represented: But this I shall not wonder at, while their Principles and Practice are so inconsistent with them. But they would do well to consider, that neither Prejudice, ill Habit of acting or thinking, can ever alter the Nature of things that are solid and true.

But I hope better things of others, whose Souls are of a more divine Original and Catholick Spirit, than not to be concerned for the present melancholy and distressed Calamity Religion groans under; who I presume, tho' of different Sentiments from me in some things, will not be offended with a Discourse of this Nature, which they must acknowledge can have no other View or Design, than to promote sincere Piety towards God, and Peace, Love and Charity among Christians.

But if nothing will prevail, but Men will resolve still with themselves to live in a Course of impiety, and to range in Parties and Sects, what can they or we expect after so long abused Patience

and Goodness of God, but some severe Signals of his awful Displeasure, will speedily overtake us, to our utter Ruin and Destruction, either of our selves, as St. James forewarns us, or by the Hands of some powerful Enemy? As the Eastern Churches, once the most flourishing of the whole Earth, by their Controversies and endless Schisms, provoked each other to that Height of Malice and Revenge, that by Degrees all moral Precepts became useless and forgot. (pray God this be not our Case) and they at last lost the whole Substance of their Religion, and became a terrible Mark of God's Vengeance. And what is most remarkable, the chief Champions of each Party, the hottest Contenders of Christianity, became the first Apostates to *Mahomet*: Which shows us how little Regard is to be had to Men, when once they have lost Charity; for the more zealous, the more dangerous.

Let Men's Gifts and Qualifications, outward Appearance and Pretensions be what they will, if they are separate from Humility and Charity, they ought to be rejected and disregarded. Whoever therefore would expect the Blessing of Peace, let them now seek Peace and ensue it.

lest the Time should come, when it is too late, and we seek it when it shall fly from us. **THIS** is the Voice of the Scripture, and our Salvation depends upon it. **Let your Moderation be known to all Men; the Lord is at hand. Charity beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things: Charity never faileth. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem: They shall prosper that love thee.**

Consider what I have said, and the Lord give you Understanding in all things. **1 Tim. 2. 7. Phil. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 13. Psal. 122. 6.**

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PREDICTIONS

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Lord Archbishop of ARMAGH, and Lord
Primate of IRELAND.

Relating to

England, Scotland, and Ireland.

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tion for any peremptory to determine that
 he does not; for though it must be acknow-
 ledged, that these Ways of God's revealing
 himself, are less frequent in these last and
 worse Times, since the great Reason assigned
 for the Frequency of Miracles and Revela-
 tion in the first Ages of the Church, viz.
 (for converting Men to, and confirming
 them in the Christian Faith) is in great
 measure ceased; For we have now a more sure
 Way of Testimony, as the Apostle St. Peter
 says, *now the written Word of God*: Where-
 in we have the Christian Doctrine display-
 ed, together with the Lives, Miracles, Ex-
 amples of our Saviour and his Apostles.
 But there is nothing has brought the
 matter of Prophecy and Revelation into so
 much question, as the Frauds and Forgeries
 of lying Popish Priests, who by counterfeit
 Miracles have strove each one to establish
 their several Orders; or for the magnify-
 ing their particular Saints, Patrons, or
 Patronesses have filled the World with most
 ridiculous and absurd Stories of pretended
 Miracles: But God be thanked, the Author
 we have here proposed, is removed far
 enough from the Exception that may be
 justly taken against those we were speaking
 of, being a Person of that known Learning,
 Piety, and Integrity; for all which he is
 famed through the Christian World, that

'twould

it would be needless as well as impossible for me to recommend him.

Now to confirm what I have been saying, that the Spirit of Prophecy has not wholly left the World, even in this Age, I have here proposed this great Man, Archbishop Usher, for an Example, as it is deliver'd by Dr. Bernard, Chaplain to the Archbishop, And certainly, let any Man lay aside prejudice, and reflect on what has been already accomplished, as to his own particular, as well as in some part to Ireland formerly, and what is now sadly fulfilling in that miserable Kingdom, and he will be forced to confess, that this holy Man was indeed a Prophet.

The Author of the Life of this excellent and worthy Primate and Archbishop, gives an Account, that among other extraordinary Gifts and Graces, which it pleased the Almighty to bestow upon him, he was wonderfully endued with a Spirit of Prophecy, whereby he gave out several true Predictions and Prophecies of Things a great while before they came to pass, whereof some we have seen fulfilled, and others remain yet to be accomplished. And though he was one that abhor'd Enthusiastick Notions, being too Learned, rational, and knowing, to admit of such idle FREAKS and Whimsies, yet he profess, That several times

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In his Life he had many things impress upon his mind, concerning future Events, with so much Warmness and Importunity, that he was not able to keep them secret, but lay under an unavoidable Necessity to make them known.

From which Spirit he foretold the *Irish* Rebellion Forty Years before it came to pass, with the very Time when it should break forth, in a Sermon preached in *Dublin* in 1601. where from *Ezek. 4. 6. Discoursing concerning the Prophets bearing the Iniquity of Judah forty Days, the Lord therein appointed a Day for a Year; he made this direct Application in Relation to the Connivance at Popery at that time.* From this Year (*says he*) will I reckon the Sin of *Ireland*, that those whom you now embrace, shall be your Ruin, and you shall bear this Iniquity. Which *Prediction* proved exactly true; for from that time 1601 to the Year 1641 was just forty Years, in which it is notoriously known that the Rebellion and Destruction of *Ireland* happened, which was acted by those popish Priests and other Papists, who were then connived at. And of this Sermon the Bishop reserved the Notes, and put a Note thereof in the Margent of his Bible, and for Twenty Years before he still lived in the Expectation of the fulfilling thereof, and the nearer the Time was the

more

more confident he was, that it was near Accomplishment, though there was no visible Appearance of any such thing; and (says Dr. Bernard) The Year before the Rebellion broke forth, the Bishop taking his Leave of me, being then going from *Ireland* to *England*, he advised me to a serious Preparation, for I should see heavy Sorrows and Miseries before I saw him again; which he delivered with as great Confidence, as if he had seen it with his Eyes; which seems to verify that of the Prophet, *Amos*. 3. 7. Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he will reveal it to his Servants the Prophets.

From this Spirit of Prophecy, he foresaw the Changes and Miseries in *England* in Church and State, for having in one of his Books (called *De Prim. Eccl. Brit.*) given a large Account of the Destruction of the Church and State of the Britains by the Saxons, about 550 Years after Christ, he gives this among other Reasons, why he insisted so largely upon it, That he foresaw that a like Judgment was yet behind, if timely Repentance and Reformation did not prevent it; and he would often mourn upon the foresight of this long before it came.

From this Spirit he gave mournful Intimations of the Death of our late Sovereign

Charles the First, of whom he would be often speaking with Fear and Trembling, even when the King had the greatest Success, and would therefore constantly pray, and gave all Advice possible to prevent any such Thing.

From this Spirit he foresaw his own poverty in worldly Things, and this he would often speak with Admiration to the Hearers, when he was in his greatest Prosperity, which the Event did most certainly verifie.

From this Spirit, he predicted the Divisions and Confusions in *England* in Matter of Religion, and the sad Consequents thereof, some of which we have seen fulfilled, and I pray God that the rest which he feared may not also be accomplished upon us.

Lastly, from this Spirit he foretold, That the greatest stroke upon the Reformed Churches was yet to come; and that the Time of the utter Ruin of the See of *Rome* should be when she thought her self most secure: And as to this last, I shall add a brief Account from the *Persons* own Hand who was concerned therein, which follow in these Words:

The Year before this Learned and Holy *Primate* Archbishop *Usher* died, I went to him, and earnestly desired him to give me in Writing his Apprehensions, concerning
Justifi-

Justification and Sanctification by *Christ*, because I had formerly heard him preach upon those points, wherein he seem'd to make those great Mysteries more intelligible to my mean Capacity, than any Thing which I had ever heard from any other; but because I had but an imperfect and confused Remembrance of the particulars, I took the Boldness to importune him, that he would please to give a brief Account of them in Writing, whereby I might the better imprint them in my Memory, of which he would willingly have excused himself, by declaring his Intentions of not writing any more, adding, that if he did write any thing, it should not exceed above a Sheet or Two; but upon my continued Importunity, I at last obtained his promise.

He coming to Town some time after, was pleased to give me a Visit at my own House, where I failed not to challenge the Benefit of my promise he had made me: He replied, that he had not writ, and yet he could not charge himself with any breach of Promise; For (said he) I began to write; but when I came to write of Sanctification, that is, of the New Creature, which God formeth by his own Spirit in every Soul which he doth truly regenerate, I found so little of it wrought in my self, that

that I could speak of it only as Parrots by Rote, and without the Knowledge and Understanding of what I might have expressed, and therefore I durst not presume to proceed any farther upon it.

And when I seemed to stand amazed to hear such an humble Confession from so great and experienc'd a Christian: He added, I must tell you, we do not well understand what Sanctification and the New Creature are: It is no less, than for a Man to be brought to an entire Resignation of his Will to the Will of God, and live in the Offering up of his Soul continually in the Flames of Love, as a whole Burnt Offering to Christ; And how little, says he, are many of those who profess Christianity experimentally acquainted with this *Work* on their Souls?

By this Discourse, I conceived he had given very excellently and clearly discovered to me that part of Sanctification which he was unwilling to write.

I then presum'd to enquire of him, what his present Apprehensions were concerning a very great Persecution which should fall upon the Church of God in these Nations of *England, Scotland and Ireland*, of which this Reverend Primate had spoken with great Confidence many Years before, when we were in the highest and fullest State

of outward Peace and Settlement. I ask'd him, Whether he did believe those sad Times to be past, or yet to come. To which he answer'd, That they were yet to come; and that he did as confidently expect it as ever he had done: Adding, That this sad Persecution would fall upon all the Protestant Churches in *Europe*. I reply'd, That I did hope it might have been past as to these Nations of ours, since I thought, that tho' we, who are the People thereof, have been punish'd much less than our Sins have deserv'd, and that our late Wars had made far less Devastations than War commonly brings upon those Countries where it pleaseth God in Judgment to suffer, yet we must needs acknowledge, that many great Houses had been burnt, ruin'd, and left without Inhabitants, many great Families impoverish'd and undone, and many thousand Lives also had been lost in that bloody War, and that *Ireland* and *Scotland* as well as *England*, had drank very deep of the Cup of God's Anger, even to the overthrow of the Government, and the utter Desolation, almost, of a very great part of those Countries.

But this holy Man, turning to me, and fixing his Eyes upon me with a serious & ireful Look, which he usually had when he spake God's Word, and not his own, and when
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the Power of God seem'd to be upon him, and to constrain him to speak, which I could easily discern much to differ from the Countenance wherewith he usually spake to me; he said thus:

Fool not your self with such hopes, for I tell you All you have yet seen hath been but the beginning of Sorrows, to what is yet to come upon the Protestant Churches of Christ, who will, e'er long fall under a sharper Persecution than ever yet was upon them; and therefore (said he to me) look you be not found in the outward Court, but a Worshiper in the Temple before the Altar; for Christ will measure all those that profess his Name, and call themselves his People; and the outward Worshipers he will leave out to be trodden down by the Gentiles. The outward Court (says he) is the formal Christian, whose Religion lies in performing the outward Duties of Christianity, without having an inward Life and Power of Faith and Love uniting them to Christ, and these God will leave to be trodden down and swept away by the Gentiles; but the Worshipers within the Temple, and before the Altar, are those who do indeed worship God in Spirit and in Truth, whose Souls are made his Temple, and he is honour'd and ador'd in the most inward Thoughts of their Hearts, and

and they sacrifice their Lusts and vile Affections, yea and their own Wills to him; and these God will hide in the hollow of his Hand, and under the shadow of his Wings. And this shall be one great difference between this last and all the other preceeding Persecutions: For in the former the most eminent and spiritual Ministers and Christians did generally suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon; but in this last Persecution these shall be preserv'd by God, as a Seed to partake of that Glory which shall immediately follow, and come upon the Church, as soon as ever this Storm shall be over; for as it shall be the sharpest, so it shall be the shortest Persecution of them all; and shall only take away the gross Hypocrites and formal Professors, but the true spiritual Believers shall be preserved till the Calamity be over.

I then ask'd him, By what Means or Instruments this great Tryal should be brought on? He answer'd, By the Papists. I reply'd, That seem'd to me very improbable they should be able to do it, since they were now little countenanc'd, and but few in these Nations, and that the Hearts of the People were more set against them than ever since the Reformation. He answer'd, again, That it would be by the Hands

Hands of the Papists, and in the way of a sudden Massacre; and that the then Pope should be the chief Instrument of it.

All this he spake with so great Assurance, and with the same serious and concern'd Countenance which I have before observ'd him to have, when I heard him foretel some things which, in all humane Appearance, were very unlikely to come to pass, which yet I my self have liv'd to see happen according to his Prediction, and this made me to give the more earnest Attention to what he then utter'd.

He then added, That the Papists were, in his Opinion, the Gentiles spoken of in the 11th of the *Revelations*, to whom the outward Court should be left, that they might tread it under foot: They having receiv'd the Gentiles Worship, in their adoring Images, and Saints departed, and in taking to themselves many Mediators: And this (said he) the Papists are now designing among themselves, and therefore be sure you be ready.

This was the Substance, and I think (for the greatest part) the very same Words which this holy Man spake to me at the time before mention'd, not long before his Death, and which I writ down, that for

great

of great and notable a Prediction might not
 Pope be lost and forgotten by my self and
 others.

This gracious Man repeated the same
 things in substance to his only Daughter
 the Lady *Tyrril*, and that with many Tears,
 and much about the same time that he
 had express'd what is aforesaid to me, and
 which the Lady *Tyrril* assur'd me of with
 her own Mouth to this purpose:

That opening the Door of his Chamber,
 she found him with his Eyes lift up to Hea-
 ven, and the Tears running apace down
 his Cheeks, and that he seem'd to be in an
 Extasie, wherein he continu'd for about
 half an Hour, not taking notice of her, tho'
 she came into the Room; but at last turn-
 ing to her, he told her, That his Thoughts
 had been taken up about the Miseries and
 Persecutions that were coming upon the
 Churches of Christ, which would be so
 sharp and bitter, that, the Contemplation
 of them had fetch'd those Tears from his
 Eyes and that he hop'd he should not live
 to see it; but possibly she might, for it was
 even at the Door: Therefore take heed
 (says he) that you be not found sleeping.

The same Things he also repeated to
 the Lady *Byffe*, Wife to the present Lord
 Y Chief

Chief Baron of *Ireland*, but with adding this Circumstance, That if they brought back the King, it might be delay'd a little longer; But (saith he) it will surely come, therefore be sure to look that you be not found unprepar'd for it.

To conclude in the Words of Dr. *Bernard* speaking of this excellent Person, Now howsoever I am as far from heeding of Prophecies this way as any; yet with me it is not improbable, that so great a Prophet, so sanctifi'd from his Youth, so knowing and eminent throughout the Universal Church, might have, at some special times more than ordinary Motions and Impulses in doing the Watchman's Part, of giving warning of Judgments approaching.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

Page 11. l. 15. read, *in the Case*. P. 24. l. 11. read, *and the Consequence in Hand of Infants, is no less stronger*. P. 56. for *Heb. 6. 2.* read *6. 1.* P. 111. l. 17. for *Diotrephes* read *Diotrophes* P. 133. l. 4. for *so near*, read, *severe*.

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